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ABSTRACT

In this issue, articles deal with various aspects of the relationship between reading and the English teacher. Titles include "Literary Humor" by Wilmer Lamar and "200 Adolescent Novels Worth Reading" by Ken Donelson; both suggest reading materials. Practical teaching tips are provided in "Comprehension Is Comprehension, Is . . ." by Jerry Walker, "Assessing Literature-Related Reading Skills" by Nancy Galen, "Readability Works for the Classroom Teacher" by Jerry L. Johns and John Adams, and "Personalizing a Reading Vocabulary" by Russell W. Jones, Jr. Discussions of programs that worked are "A Coordinated Course in English and Reading" by Kay Jacob, "Good Luck with a Unified Reading Program" by William R. Cantrall, and "Buddy and Reading" by G. Ray Musgrave (this last article is a description of how to motivate students who need remedial reading instruction). (KS)

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Reading and the English Teacher

ILLINOIS ENGLISH BULLETIN

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A Message From Your Editor

The response to the call for manuscripts for this issue on reading and the English teacher has been overwhelming. It is clear that interest is high on this topic. The result has been a collection of articles which I am proud to introduce.

Wilmer Lamar, Executive Secretary of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English and past editor of the *Bulletin* has contributed the first of a two-part study on literary humor. His experience teaching both at Decatur High School and at the University of Illinois makes him especially well qualified to select reading materials for use in English class. We are lucky to receive the fruits of Wilmer's sabbatical research. Ken Donelson's annotated list of noteworthy adolescent novels written during the last five years should be a godsend to busy teachers looking for a really current selection of readings for students not yet ready for the classics. Ken's editorship of the newly revised NCTE booklist for senior high students, *Books for You,* makes him an authority on what is new and good to get kids reading. I am sure you are familiar with Ken's name in connection with his many professional activities: he is the current editor of the *Newsletter* for the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents, the past editor of the *Arizona English Bulletin,* the immediate past Chairperson of the Conference on English Education, and an active member of the NCTE Committee on Censorship, having revised the latest edition of "The Students' Right to Read." You may also remember that he was the luncheon speaker at last year's IATE Fall Conference.

Jerry Walker emphasizes the importance of sign and symbol recognition in his article on reading. Jerry edited the latest edition of the NCTE booklist for junior high school students, *Your Reading,* and has long been a national figure in English Education, publishing articles in a variety of professional journals and writing books for Scholastic and Singer/Random House. He is a past Program Chairperson of the Conference on English Education and an evaluator in two national studies sponsored by NCTE: *A Study of the Teaching of English in Selected British Schools* and *A National Study of High School English Programs.* Jerry Johns, who has written for the International Reading Association and is active in professional organizations, joins a fellow reading expert to give some valuable tips on assessing readability. They provide, at the conclusion of their article, a useful list of readability evaluations of frequently used texts and supplementary classroom materials.

The public school perspective is given in articles by teachers working in the field. Nancy Galen presents some very practical suggestions for making your own group reading inventory, Russell W. Jones, Jr., Reading Specialist, gives practical tips on vocabulary building, and Kay Jacob describes in useful detail how English and Reading teachers at Romeoville High School

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joined forces to improve the reading skills of their students. G. Ray Musgrave's account of how he got one student to read should suggest ideas for helping others like his pupil Buddy — kids who are able but unwilling to be helped by conventional remedial reading techniques. Mr. Musgrave has had ten years' experience in the public schools — seven years as an elementary teacher and three years on a high school faculty. Teachers familiar with Fader's *Hooked on Books* will be interested to see how the principles have been successfully applied in another boys' school. William R. Cantrall, now on leave and residing in Illinois, describes the steps he took to unify a school-wide reading program during his early years as a reading counselor.

I regret that the *Bulletin* cannot print all the fine manuscripts submitted for consideration for this issue. I only wish space were not so limited. I particularly want to thank the Board of Readers, upon whose judgment I relied in making a final selection — especially Professors Jeannette Kuhn of Northern Illinois University and Evelyn Haught of Eastern Illinois University.

If you like thick *Bulletins*, join in IATE's membership campaign. Our annual dues of $5 entitles members to a year's subscription — a real bargain! Help support this publication and allow it to grow by renewing your membership and getting your colleagues to join!

DOROTHY MATTHEWS
Editor

Literary Humor: Readings to Enliven the English Class

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Clarence Darrow once said that living is not an intellectual process; it is an emotional venture of desires and pleasures and pains. My forty-six years of teaching on both the high school and university levels confirm this opinion. Too often educators forget that students' desires and pleasures can be important components in the learning process.

Several years ago when I was teaching in Decatur, Illinois, students in my class were giving speeches. One by one they walked, some almost crawled, to the front of the room to hold forth. Things progressed at a rather monotonous pace and the students weren't really listening to what was being said. Then a girl stepped forward and started. She mentioned that she and her sister had decided that

Mr. Lamar will classroom-test this material in special rhetoric sections scheduled for the spring semester at the University of Illinois. The second part of this study, to appear in next year's *Bulletin*, will report his findings.

there was no reason why they should wait until their mother died to divide her personal effects. She described in some detail their conversation. "You take this," "You can have this," "No, I want the blue vase," et cetera, et cetera. It came down to the silver flatware, which seemed to be the only item that was at all valuable and concerning which the girls couldn't decide. So they approached their mother. "Mother," one said, "who do you want to have the silver when you die?"

I have long since forgotten what the mother replied, but I do remember that I have seldom seen a class so attentive. She really captured the attention of her audience. No one in the room, myself included, ever did know whether she was serious.

I mention this incident to show that even in the midst of a most serious class exercise a touch of the bizarre, an appeal to the emotions, was enough to arouse a class out of its lethargy.

This was an isolated happening which illustrates that living, as Mr. Darrow pointed out, is not an intellectual process. It is at best a blend between the intellect and the emotions, complex and unstable as they are. A teacher is wise if he can capitalize on this fact of life. A student may be passive and stubborn on the one hand, but when the spirit moves him, his curiosity and desire for learning may win out and motivate him.

That is why reading materials that will appeal to his emotions, as well as his intellect, are most important. That is why Prince Charles of England in a recent TV interview on "Sixty-minutes" commented, "Humor is the most useful ingredient to get people to listen to what you are saying."

Reading materials enlivened by wit and humor have many uses in the English classroom. For instance, I have found such readings an effective substitute for the often dull essays to be found in books of prose models used to motivate student writing. Almost all the essays in these anthologies are deadly serious. They may include such subjects as "Types of Ethical Theory," "Attitudes toward Death," "The Extreme Situation," "Filial Sentiments of a Patricide," and the letters of Heloise and Abelard. One of the books sometimes used, particularly by teachers imbued with the promise of the new grammars, is one by Charlton Laird called *The Miracles of Language*, one of the chapters of which is "The Gods Who Trouble the Waters of Our Voice Stream." Even Mr. Laird himself admits that he becomes very technical. In his "English Consonant Chart," for example, he uses such words as alveolopalatal, velar, affricates, fricatives — words that may be important for one who is making a technical study of language but for the average

student who is struggling to write a logical and concise sentence, this approach is dull.

Understand, I am not doubting the worth of such essays per se; undoubtedly they provide some knowledge of our cultural heritage. And for that they might be praised. Only seldom do you find in prose anthologies any examples of writing in a comic or humorous vein. It is as if the editors of such books were bent on a purely intellectual exercise, even at the risk of destroying any interest on the part of the students. And the booklists given to students for so-called recreational reading are often devoid of titles chosen for their humor. So rare is the use of humor by teachers that one professor in the Psychology Department at the University of Southern California actually made the national news recently when he advanced the idea that the way to keep students awake during lessons is through their funny bones. It is a sad state of affairs that this idea was regarded as so unique as to warrant special mention; surely such a technique has been used by good teachers from the beginning. The name of his course, though, does deserve special mention. It is called "Quality Teaching Effectiveness Program," a title which could only have been bestowed by a psychologist or an educator.

Businessmen have long known the value of humor. One professional gag writer, Robert Orben, actually makes a good living acting as a comedy consultant for businesses. Lawrence Lessin, Professor of Management at Hofstra University and President of Business Research Publications, reports that more than three thousand businesses have turned to Orben for materials to help them sell their wares. The point is — if businesses, with all their rigidity, resort to gag writers for witty comments to add spice to their messages, think of the multitude of opportunities a classroom teacher has to enliven lessons.

Do teachers think enough of their "consumers" to make the same efforts to bring humor into the classroom? I doubt that they do. Nearly twenty years ago, I conducted a study of student opinion of their English teachers. The results, published in the *Illinois English Bulletin* ("Teachers as Students See Them"), revealed that of the more than four thousand responses, the most frequently recurring complaint was that English teachers lacked a sense of humor! And I doubt if things are much better today.

Perhaps English teachers neglect comic materials because they have too narrow a definition of humor. I feel it is important to examine implications of this term, without over-scrutinizing. For, as E. B. White has pointed out in *Some Remarks on Humor,* it is

possible to squeeze the essence out of comedy by analysis. To probe deeply, then, into all of the ramifications and definitions of such words as comic, humor, laughter, wit, absurdity, irony and satire with all of the psychology and philosophy behind them is not my purpose. Some truth is revealed by H. W. Fowler in *Humour* when he says that "so much has been written on humour, wit, satire, sarcasm, invective, irony, cynicism, and the sardonic, it would be presumptuous and unnecessary to attempt further disquisition."

True as this may be, in considering the uses of humor in the classroom, some definition is necessary.

To do this we shall refer to a few writers who have made a thorough study of the subject. You, as a reader, can judge what they have to say; you can agree or disagree with their comments, and can use your own ideas to judge the selections that comprise the bulk of this project.

Marie Collins Swabey, for example, makes an important point in *Comic Laughter:* humor goes far beyond, far deeper, than varieties of infantile, drunken, hysterical, or nonsense laughter. It may deal with politics, sex, social mores; it also may be concerned with religion and philosophy.

George Meredith in *An Essay on Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit* puts the same thought in another way when he writes "to touch and kindle the mind through laughter demands more than sprightliness, a most subtle delicacy."

Meredith continues by saying that the comic poet "is not concerned with the beginnings or endings or surroundings, but what you are now weaving. To understand his work and value it, you must have a sober liking of your kind, and a sober estimate of civilized qualities. . . . The true test of Comedy is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter."

The comic spirit, to use Meredith's phrase, is "humanly malign." But as Louis Kronenberger in *The Thread of Laughter* states, "it is kindly and companionable, in the sense that it brings people together as fellow-fools and sinners, and is not only criticism but understanding." This is almost an echo from Aristotle, who says in his *Poetics* that "the causes of laughter are errors and deformities that do not pain or injure us; the comic mask, for instance, is deformed and distorted but not painfully so."

As you discern up to this point, trying to define or put limits on the comic spirit is very much as Samuel Johnson pointed out in 1751 in a piece called "The Difficulty of Defining Comedy." Johnson said that "*definitions are hazardous.* Things modified by human

understandings, subject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are scarcely to be included in any standing form of expression, because they are always suffering some alteration of their state."

When we think of comedy, or the comic spirit, we recognize with Johnson how difficult it is to define our terms. But there is one facet of the subject that all recognize — that is laughter, which is certainly a by-product and one deserving of our consideration.

In his famous essay "On Wit and Humour," William Hazlett has this to say, "Man is the only animal that laughs and weeps; for he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are, and what they ought to be." He continues by saying: "You cannot force people to laugh: they must laugh of themselves, or not at all. As we laugh from spontaneous impulse, we laugh the more at any restraint upon this impulse. We laugh at a thing merely because we ought not."

Charles Baudelaire in "On the Essence of Laughter" mentions human pride as the natural cause of laughter. "Laughter," he says, "is the expression of the idea of superiority."

In "Laughter," Max Beerbohm speaks of laughter as "joyous surrender." It has been said that smiles give evidence of mature criticism. So if we want to restrain ourselves — if we don't want emotion to pour out like water from a faucet, we smile. Then our friends might think we are appreciative and reflective but not overly exuberant. And we can't have that. The young are prone to laugh uproariously; the old to smile wisely.

I suppose if we want to be serious on the subject of laughter we would have to agree with Louis Kronenberger, who mentions that laughter is concerned with human imperfection, "with people's failure to measure up either to the world's or their own conception of excellence. All tragedy is idealistic and says in effect, 'the pity of it.' All comedy tends to be skeptical and says in effect, 'the absurdity of it' — that in spite of fine talk and noble resolutions, a man is a mere creature of pettiness, and vanity and folly."

It follows then that comedy is criticism because it exposes human beings for what they are in contrast to what they profess to be. It is this criticism that will serve as a starting place for class discussions and a possible springboard for student writing.

In an effort to find useful comic material for English teachers, I have spent a semester in research. I found no lack of writings in the comic vein. In fact, it is the very bulk of comic writing that might make it difficult for a teacher to find quickly something with

classroom potential. My final choice is given in the following list. While I shall admit that I have chosen those which amuse me personally, with no regard for essays with historical importance, the authors represented do use the comic vein to express their personal reactions and criticism to life about them.

SUGGESTED READINGS IN HUMOR

George Ade, "The Fable of the Honest Money-Maker," in *An Anthology of American Humor*, ed. Brom Weber (Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1962).

George Ade, "The Fable of the Preacher Who Flew His Kite, but Not Because He Wished to Do So," in *Humor in America*, ed. Enid Vernon (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976).

Woody Allen, "The UFO Menace," *The New Yorker*, June 13, 1977.

Russell Baker, "Paupers, Be Fruitful, Multiply," *The Chicago Tribune*, State Ed., July 23, 1977.

Max Beerbohm, "On Speaking French," in *And Even Now* (E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1921).

Earl H. Brill, "Sex Is Dead," *The Christian Century*, August 3, 1966.

Heywood Broun, "The First Robin," in *It Seems to Me* (Heywood Broun, 1935).

Robert Benchley, "Throwing Back the European Offensive," in *The Early Worm* (Harper and Brothers, 1927).

Robert Benchley, "The Children's Hour," in *The Benchley Roundup* (Harper and Brothers, 1936).

Robert Benchley, "The Mystery of Bridge Building," in *Essays for Study*, by Maurice Baudin, Jr., and Karl Pfeiffer (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960).

Eric Berne, "Can People Be Judged by Their Appearance?" in *A Layman's Guide to Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis* (Simon and Schuster, 1947).

Art Buchwald, "Polluting the Political Atmosphere," *The Chicago Tribune*, State Ed., May 28, 1974.

Art Buchwald, "Upping Prison Requirements," in *Humor in America*, ed. Enid Vernon (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976).

Stuart Chase, "Gobbledygook," in *Power of Words* (Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1953).

Irvin S. Cobb, "Speaking of Operations," *The Saturday Evening Post*, November 6, 1915.

John Crosby, "Radio and Television Dialog," in *Modern Essays,* ed. Russel Nye (Scott, Foresman and Company, 1963).

Ralph Ellison, "Living with Music," *High Fidelity,* December, 1955.

Peter Farb, "The Name of the Game," *New York Times,* February 18, 1974.

Dudley Fitts, "On Unreading the Classics," *New York Times Book Review,* July 22, 1951.

Raymond Hull, "The Peter Principle," in *Subject and Structure,* by John M. Wasson (Little, Brown and Company, 1975).

Helen Lawrenson, "Latins Are Lousy Lovers," *Esquire, 40th Anniversary Celebration,* October, 1973.

Stephen Leacock, "My Financial Career," in *The Leacock Roundabout* (Dodd, Mead & Co., 1946).

Stephen Leacock, "On the Need for a Quiet College," in *Model Memoirs* (Dodd, Mead & Co., Inc., 1938).

Don Marquis, "Preface to a Book of Statistics," in *Prefaces* (D. Appleton and Company, 1918).

John McPhee, "Sullen Gold," *The New Yorker,* March 25, 1974.

H. L. Mencken, "In Memoriam: W. J. B.," *Prejudices,* 1926.

Willie Morris, "Miss Abbott," in *North Toward Home* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967).

George Orwell, "Some Thoughts on the Common Toad," in *Shooting an Elephant and Other Essays* (Harcourt Brace & World, 1945).

Mike Royko, "A Slick Dream with Loopholes," in *Slats Grobnik and Some Other Friends* (E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1973).

Jean Stafford, "Con Ed and Me," *New York Times,* June 8, 1964.

Wallace Stegner, *The Town Dump* (Brandt & Brandt, 1959).

Jonathan Swift, ["Causes of War"] in "Voyage to Lilliput," *Gulliver's Travels,* ed. Robert Greenberg (W. W. Norton, Inc., 1961), pp. 21-22.

Jonathan Swift, ["Diversions in Court"] in "Voyage to Lilliput," pp. 30-32.

Jonathan Swift, ["Solution for Easy Composition"] in "Voyage to Laputa," pp. 155-158.

"The Talk of the Town," *The New Yorker,* February 28, 1977. [Subject: "Telly Savalis Sells Clothes"; Unsigned]

James Thurber, "University Days," in *My Life and Hard Times* (Harper & Row, Inc., 1933).

James Thurber, "Courtship Through the Ages," in *My World — and Welcome to It* (Harcourt Brace & World, 1942).

James Thurber, "The New Vocabularianism," in *Lanterns and Lances* (Harper & Row, 1961).

Mark Twain, "Advice to Youth, About 1882," in *Readings for Writers,* by Jo McCuln and Anthony Winckler (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974).

Voltaire, "The Best of All Possible Worlds," in *Candide* (Modern Library, 1930).

Lee Strout White, "Farewell, My Lovely!" in *The Second Tree from the Corner* (Harper & Brothers, 1954).

Tom Wolfe, "Thursday Morning in a New York Subway Station," in *The Kandy Kolored Tangerine Flake Streamline Baby* (Farrar, Straus & Givoux, 1964).

Robert M. Yoder, "Is There a Life after Forty?" *The Saturday Evening Post,* November 15, 1947.

200 Adolescent Novels Worth Reading: 1972-1977

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I suppose the most obvious question English teachers or reading teachers are likely to ask about adolescent literature is why read stuff like that when so much great literature is readily available and when parents are crying out to return to the basics and fine reading material. A fair question.

No claim can be made that teenage literature has produced any great or enduring work of art, no adolescent *Crime and Punishment* or *Macbeth* or *Persuasion,* not even a teenage *Female Quixote* or *Cranford* or *Vathek.* But amazingly enough, some highly respectable work has been written for young adults. Few writers, after all, worry much about writing for posterity or for future literary markets, rather aiming at the market today. More important, if much appears in teenage literature that is not particularly fine by adult standards (literary or otherwise), that concerns adolescents but little, for they read for the here and now, much as most adults do. Writers aiming at any market, whether it be readers of mysteries or westerns or romances or gothics or *Playboy* or *PMLA,* must keep their readers in mind, and *that* the better writers of teenage books do admirably as they write far more perceptively than most adult critics know.

The real wonder of adolescent literature is how very much of it is well written. If much is literary garbage, much of any year's

production for adults is also garbage. If adolescent literature has produced hack writers (but quite popular hack writers) like Rosamund du Jardin and Amelia Walden and Gene Olson, it has also produced writers as excellent as Vera and Bill Cleaver, Robert Cormier, John Donovan, Rosa Guy, Mollie Hunter, M. E. Kerr, Ronald Lockley, Ursula LeGuin, Anne McCaffrey, Mary Stolz, and Laurence Yep.

But why read all these adolescent novels? Because kids like them and because they offer a transition from simpler and childish material to adult and then great literature. If all our students were girls from white, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class homes where parents read and collected books and surrounded children with cultural artifacts and if those children were always polite and always did the right thing and always listened to adults and authorities, I suppose there might be little reason for having a body of literature aimed specifically at adolescents. Unhappily but realistically, some kids had the poor taste to choose the wrong parents and some kids do not look upon reading, any kind of reading, as a joy forever, much less a pleasure right now. Some English teachers and reading teachers and librarians might prefer to ignore those children, usually boys, who hate reading and all the boredom and failure reading represents, but teachers who really want to help kids and who really believe in that educational truism, start where the child is and then take him someplace, may discover that *Pride and Prejudice* and *Great Expectations* and *The Scarlet Letter* are no answers to most students who do not like to read. These same teachers may discover, much to their surprise, that *A Separate Peace* and *Jaws* and *Childhood's End* are not necessarily any more satisfactory answers. Possibly, just possibly, some good adolescent novels like Nathaniel Benchley's *Only Earth and Sky Last Forever* or Robert Cormier's *The Chocolate War* or Anne McCaffrey's *Dragonsinger* might help. That assumes, of course, that teachers and librarians really care. It also assumes that teachers and librarians are willing to read adolescent books and keep up to date with the new books constantly spewing from the presses to find help for young readers.

Obviously, the best way to keep up to date with adolescent literature is to read widely in the field. The following list of 200 adolescent novels is admittedly a highly personal selection by a finite and idiosyncratic reader. I chose books that I liked, and that explains to me, if no one else, certain omissions. I know that Judy Blume's *Forever* has proved highly popular with many women. I hated the book, though I have liked practically everything else she ever wrote.

Readers should remember that the list covers something like a five year period, and they might also remember that I had to stop and get this thing finished at some point. Hence, books I received and read after July 1, 1977, are simply not included. It is, as I have said, a highly personal list. I will stand behind it, but I expect other people to be less enthusiastic about some of my choices and to wax indignant about certain books I chose to leave off. So be it.

Anyone dealing with adolescent books recognizes that certain journals rapidly become essential in keeping up to date. Journals like the following are most helpful to anybody in the rapidly changing field of adolescent literature: *Horn Book Magazine, School Library Journal, Wilson Library Bulletin, ALAN Newsletter, Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, Booklist, Interracial Books For Children Bulletin,* and *The Lion and the Unicorn: A Critical Journal of Children's Literature.* Additionally, readers would be advised to get on the mailing lists of many of the major publishers of adolescent literature, Dell and Bantam and New American Library and Avon in paperback, Little, Brown, Knopf, Harper, Nelson, Bradbury, Atheneum, Lippincott, Macmillan, Farrar, Four Winds, Pantheon, Delacorte, Viking, Seabury, Holt, Dial, Doubleday, Morrow, Scribner, Coward, Crowell, and Houghton Mifflin in hardback, to mention only a few.

Here, at long last, is my list of 200 recent, readable, and excellent adolescent novels.

1. Louise Albert, **BUT I'M READY TO GO,** NY: Bradbury, 1976. Judy may be intelligent, but her school classifies her as a learning disability case, and her classmates tease her for her slowness. She decides to prove they're wrong by going to New York City, auditioning as a singer, and becoming famous.
2. James Aldridge, **THE MARVELOUS MONGOLIAN,** Boston: Little, 1974. A Mongolian horse is captured and shipped to England for experimental breeding. He escapes with his new mate and starts homeward.
3. James Aldridge, **A SPORTING PROPOSITION,** Boston: Little, 1973. A poor boy and a rich girl both claim a wild Welsh pony.
4. Margaret J. Anderson, **TO NOWHERE AND BACK,** NY: Knopf, 1975. A bored American girl visiting England travels 100 years back in time.
5. Honor Arundel, **THE BLANKET WORD,** NY: Nelson, 1973. Jan travels to her dying mother in North Wales and reconsiders her own selfishness and the meaning of love.
6. Alice Bach, **A FATHER EVERY FEW YEARS,** NY: Harper, 1977. Tim told others that he hated his father who had left the family, but secretly he missed his father and prayed for his return.
7. Alice Bach, **MOLLIE MAKE-BELIEVE,** NY: Harper, 1974. A young girl moves toward maturity as she faces the reality of her grandmother's death.

8. Martin Ballard, **DOCKIE,** NY: Harper, 1973. In the 1920's, Moggy Harris leaves school to join his father on the London docks. He soon is involved in labor struggles.
9. Lynn Reid Banks, **SARAH AND AFTER,** NY: Doubleday, 1977. Three matriarchs of the Old Testament, Sarah and Rebecca and Leah, tell of life from the entrance into Egypt until the sewing of Joseph's many-colored coat.
10. Gunnel Beckman, **ADMISSION TO THE FEAST,** NY: Holt, 1972. Annika Hallin learns she will soon die of leukemia.
11. Gunnel Beckman, **THAT EARLY SPRING,** NY: Viking, 1977. This sequel to **MIA ALONE** finds Mia living with her soon-to-be divorced father and becoming intrigued with Martin, a music student.
12. John Bellairs, **THE FIGURE IN THE SHADOWS,** NY: Dial, 1975. Sequel to **THE HOUSE WITH A CLOCK IN ITS WALLS,** Lewis finds an old and mysterious coin.
13. Nathaniel Benchley, **BEYOND THE MISTS,** NY: Harper, 1975. In the 11th Century, Gunnar travels with his fellow Norsemen to North America.
14. Nathaniel Benchley, **BRIGHT CANDLES,** NY: Harper, 1974. A 16-year-old boy in the Dutch resistance during World War II is captured and imprisoned.
15. Nathaniel Benchley, **A NECESSARY END,** NY: Harper, 1976. Ralph Bowers' diary entries from late 1943 until October 1975 about his ship's crew.
16. Nathaniel Benchley, **ONLY EARTH AND SKY LAST FOREVER,** NY: Harper, 1972. Dark Elk's need to prove himself in battle leads him to join Crazy Horse at the Battle of the Little Big Horn.
17. Judy Blume, **IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD,** NY: Bradbury, 1972. Karen Newman's parents are getting a divorce.
18. Nancy Bond, **A STRING IN THE HARP,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. A professor, grieving over his wife's death, takes his family to Wales, and his son Peter begins to have visions.
19. Marc Brandel, **THE MINE OF LOST DAYS,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1974. Henry falls down a copper-mine chimney into a mysterious world which is timeless and dangerous.
20. Robbie Branscum, **JOHNNY MAY,** NY: Doubleday, 1975. A hill country girl raised by her grandparents and two aunts determines to expose a man whose four wives have died mysteriously.
21. Sue Ellen Bridgers, **HOME BEFORE DARK,** NY: Knopf, 1976. Having lived on the road with her itinerant family, Stella Mae Willis looks forward to settling down in a permanent home.
22. Lolah Burford, **THE VISION OF STEPHEN,** NY: Macmillan, 1972. A boy out of the 7th Century suddenly reappears in the 19th Century and wanders back and forth between the two time periods.
23. Beverly Butler, **A GIRL NAMED WENDY,** NY: Dodd, 1976. Fifteen-year-old Wendy is told to stay with her aunt rather than return to her now-separated parents. Rebelling, she returns home to a mother who doesn't want her and a grandmother who helps Wendy to recover some of her Menominee Indian heritage.
24. Betsy Byars, **THE PINBALLS,** NY: Harper, 1976. One girl and

two boys in a foster home label themselves pinballs, kids sent off to be out of the way, and slowly learn that they can have some control over their lives and destinies.

25. Hope Campbell, **NO MORE TRAINS TO TOTTENVILLE,** NY: McCall, 1972. Jane Andrews' problems are compounded by a brother who wants to run away from school and a mother who decides to leave home.
26. Hope Campbell, **LEGEND OF LOST EARTH,** NY: Four Winds, 1977. Giles becomes an Earth Worshipper, a forbidden cult, in a future world where the air is polluted and people live without hope.
27. Eleanor Cameron, **TO THE GREEN MOUNTAIN,** NY: Dutton, 1975. A young girl's life in an Ohio town during World War I.
28. Winifred Cawley, **GRAN AT COALGATE,** NY: Holt, 1974. Jinnie's vacation with Gran in a 1920's mining town in Northern England changes her life as she meets people totally different from those she's known.
29. John Christopher, **DOM AND VA,** NY: Macmillan, 1973. Following a bloody battle, a young warrior flees taking with him an embittered girl in this novel set in the past.
30. John Christopher, **WILD JACK,** NY: Macmillan, 1974. In 23rd Century England, Clive Anderson is sent to a frightening training school to drive out his nonconformist tendencies. He escapes and joins a band of outlaws.
31. Alice Childress, **A HERO AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A SANDWICH,** NY: Coward, 1973. Ten people tell the story of Benjie Johnson, a 13-year-old already nearly hooked on heroin.
32. Keith Claire, **THE OTHERWISE GIRL,** NY: Holt, 1976. Matt goes to visit an English friend and meets a young girl, supposedly drowned eight years before, unhappily living in a limbo somewhere between life and death. The book lies somewhere between folklore and fantasy but is quite believable.
33. Patricia Clapp, **I'M DEBORAH SAMPSON,** NY: Lothrop, 1977. Everyone thought Private Robert Shurtlieff served well in the Revolutionary War, but in truth it was Deborah masquerading as a man. Based on fact.
34. Vera and Bill Cleaver, **DELPHA GREEN AND COMPANY,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972. Teen-age Delpha Green turns a town upside down with her astrological wisdom.
35. Vera and Bill Cleaver, **DUST OF THE EARTH,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1975. Another of the many fine novels by the Cleavers, this about the harsh Dakotas of the 1920's.
36. Vera and Bill Cleaver, **ME TOO,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1973. After her father deserts the family, 12-year-old Lydia tries to take care of and educate her retarded twin sister Lorna.
37. Vera and Bill Cleaver, **TRIAL VALLEY,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1977. Mary Call, heroine of **WHERE THE LILIES BLOOM,** is now 16 and being courted by two eligible suitors. Her decision is complicated by an abandoned boy who needs Mary's help.
38. Bruce Clements, **I TELL A LIE EVERY SO OFTEN,** NY: Farrar, 1974. In 1848, 14-year-old Henry goes up the Missouri River with his brother.

39. James Collier and Christopher Collier, **THE BLOODY COUNTRY,** NY: Four Winds, 1976. Connecticut families move into the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania and there find resentment and war from the people already living there. Set just after the Revolutionary War.
40. James Collier and Christopher Collier, **MY BROTHER SAM IS DEAD,** NY: Four Winds, 1974. The Meeker family and the Revolutionary War.
41. Susan Cooper, **THE GREY KING,** NY: Atheneum, 1975. Fourth in a projected 5-volume series of fantasy, this beautifully written novel is about Will Stanton and the Forces of Light.
42. Barbara Corcoran, **CABIN IN THE SKY,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. Tom Forcier comes to New York City to make his way in the theatrical world of the 1950's, a world of hope and stage blacklisting.
43. Barbara Corcoran, **THE FARAWAY ISLAND,** NY: Atheneum, 1977. Shy Lynn is not pleased to discover that her father has accepted a Fulbright for Belgium. He agrees that she can stay with her grandmother on Nantucket Island for the year, but Lynn finds that she cannot run away from everyone and every responsibility.
44. Robert Cormier, **THE CHOCOLATE WAR,** NY: Pantheon, 1974. Jerry's school is run by a fraternity and a Machiavellian teacher. When Jerry tries to disturb the system and the universe, he finds that nice guys can finish last.
45. Robert Cormier, **I AM THE CHEESE,** NY: Pantheon, 1977. Readers will slowly discover that Adam Farmer is not really on a bike trip to see his father but is being imprisoned and drugged by a government fearful that Adam just might possibly remember some significant details about the time when his family was murdered. A frightening indictment of the power of government to manipulate people.
46. John Craig, **ZACH,** NY: Coward, 1972. Although he's lived on the Ojibway Indian Reservation all his life, 18-year-old Zach Kenebec learns he is the sole survivor of the Agawa Tribe.
47. Helen Cresswell, **THE WINTER OF THE BIRDS,** NY: Macmillan, 1975. Edward Flack may want to be a hero, but his life in an urban English city hardly seems promising or heroic, until —.
48. Julia Cunningham, **COME TO THE EDGE,** NY: Pantheon, 1977. Ten-year-old Gravel Winter escapes his orphan asylum to wander and to try to find a home and love.
49. Jane Louise Curry, **THE WATCHERS,** NY: Atheneum, 1975. Unhappy at home, Ray Siler is shipped off to live with his mother's kinfolk in a southern West Virginia hollow and there he finds a mystery.
50. Paula Danziger, **THE CAT ATE MY GYMSUIT,** NY: Delacorte, 1974. Marcy Lewis hates school, her father, and herself for being fat. Then a nonconformist English teacher begins to change Marcy's life.
51. Peter Davies, **FLY AWAY PAUL,** NY: Crown, 1974. Paul sees nothing but hopelessness in his life in a Montreal boys' home so he flees.

52. T. Degens, **TRANSPORT 7-41-R,** NY: Viking, 1974. A young German girl in the Russian sector of Germany helps an old man return his wife's body to West Germany.
53. Paige Dixon, **MAY I CROSS YOUR GOLDEN RIVER?,** NY: Atheneum, 1975. Eighteen-year-old Jordan Phillips learns he has an incurable disease.
54. Paige Dixon, **PROMISES TO KEEP,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. The prominent Miller family inherits Lon Miller, half Bill Miller's son, half his Vietnamese mother's son. Lon's heritage and his hatred of war make him unpopular in small Miller's Lake in New England.
55. Wayne Dodd, **A TIME OF HUNTING,** NY: Seabury, 1975. Like his father, Jess loves hunting, but he gradually loses his passion for it.
56. John Donovan, **FAMILY,** NY: Harper, 1976. Four apes being used in a university experiment escape into the countryside. One of the apes, Sasha, tells of their doomed flight.
57. John Donovan, **REMOVE PROTECTIVE COATING A LITTLE AT A TIME,** NY: Harper, 1973. Harry struggles in his growing up. Meeting profane and crusty 72-year-old Amelia helps.
58. Mel Ellis, **THIS MYSTERIOUS RIVER,** NY: Holt, 1972. Ham Drumm dreams of a bicycle as only a 12-year-old could during the depression so he "borrows" $10.00 from a church collection.
59. P. A. Engebrecht, **UNDER THE HAYSTACK,** NY: Nelson, 1973. Three abandoned girls try to survive.
60. Stig Ericson, **DAN HENRY IN THE WILD WEST,** NY: Delacorte, 1976. Dan Henry (his real name is Daniel Gustafsson, but an official thought it too hard to say and changed it) comes to the United States in the 1870's. A frontier story of hardship and the first of a trilogy.
61. Carol Farley, **THE GARDEN IS DOING FINE,** NY: Atheneum, 1975. Corrie Sheldon's father is dying, and she tries to find some meaning in his life and hers.
62. Anita MacRae Feagles, **THE YEAR THE DREAMS CAME BACK,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. Nell finds her life changing drastically after her mother's suicide. Then attractive Amy Traynor, 35, comes to town and both Nell and her father take notice.
63. Jeff Fields, **A CRY OF ANGELS,** NY: Atheneum, 1974. Earl, a Georgia orphan, tries to make sense out of the injustices and brutalities around him.
64. James Forman, **THE LIFE AND DEATH OF YELLOW BIRD,** NY: Farrar, 1973. Yellow Bird, Sioux warrior, believes in the ancient Indian ways as the white man's world begins to tighten around his world.
65. James Forman, **THE SURVIVOR,** NY: Farrar, 1976. Dr. Ullman and family are caught in the horrors of World War II as they see Amsterdam taken by the Nazis. Only son David manages to survive.
66. Paula Fox, **THE SLAVE DANCER,** NY: Bradbury, 1973. Jessie is shanghaied and forced on board ship to play his fife for the slaves.
67. Lynne Gessner, **NAVAJO SLAVE,** NY: Harvey House, 1976. A Navajo boy is kidnapped by Utes, sold to a rich Spanish landowner, and required to work with horses in the late 1800's.

68. Jean Craighead George, **JULIE OF THE WOLVES,** NY: Harper, 1972. An Eskimo girl lost in a wilderness of snow and tundra survives with the help of a wolf pack.
69. Gloria Goldreich, **SEASON OF DISCOVERY,** NY: Nelson, 1977. Lisa Robinow has learned to love and accept her retarded twin brother, but her first encounter with anti-semitism shakes her up.
70. Bette Greene, **SUMMER OF MY GERMAN SOLDIER,** NY: Dial, 1973. A Jewish girl helps a German prisoner of war to escape with tragic results.
71. Margaret Greaves, **STONE OF TERROR,** NY: Harper, 1974. A 17th century tale of Philip who joins his grandfather on the small, witchcraft-ridden island of Serq and finds himself drawn to Marie, niece of the island's priestess.
72. Rosa Guy, **THE FRIENDS,** NY: Holt, 1973. West Indian Phyllisia comes to Harlem and finds little but loneliness until she meets Edith.
73. Rosa Guy, **RUBY,** NY: Viking, 1976. Ruby lives with her East Indian father in Harlem. Overly protected by her father, Ruby finds affection temporarily with Daphne.
74. Janet Campbell Hale, **THE OWL'S SONG,** NY: Doubleday, 1974. A young Indian boy attempts to cope with his mother's death and a friend's suicide and life in a nearly all black school.
75. Lynn Hall, **STICKS AND STONES,** Chicago: Follett, 1972. Gossip wrecks the friendship of two men.
76. Virginia Hamilton, **ARILLA SUN DOWN,** NY: Morrow, 1976. Arilla is part black, part Indian, a girl in search of her own identity.
77. Virginia Hamilton, **M. C. HIGGINS THE GREAT,** NY: Macmillan, 1974. M. C. Higgins lives on the side of Sarah's mountain which is scarred by years of coal slag deposits. M. C. longs to escape to the city.
78. Florence Parry Heide, **WHEN THE SAD ONE COMES TO STAY,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1975. When her politically ambitious mother, Sally, leaves her husband because he lacks ambition, Sara is caught between two value systems.
79. Janet Hickman, **THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW,** NY: Macmillan, 1974. Moravians in a small Ohio town during the Revolutionary War are attacked by Indians.
80. Isabelle Holland, **ALAN AND THE ANIMAL KINGDOM,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1977. When Aunt Jessie dies, Alan vows to keep his animal kingdom safe even though he has no one to take care of himself. He finds his first real human friend in a frequently drunk veterinarian.
81. Isabelle Holland, **THE MAN WITHOUT A FACE,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972. A boy finds education and love with a male tutor, and the tutor's death prepares the boy for adulthood.
82. Isabelle Holland, **OF LOVE AND DEATH AND OTHER JOURNEYS,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1975. After her mother discovers she has cancer, Meg first meets her real father.
83. Felice Holman, **SLAKE'S LIMBO,** NY: Scribner, 1974. Aremis Slake, myopic and bullied, flees from one more attack by a gang and accidentally finds a hideaway.

84. Donald Honig, **WINTER ALWAYS COMES,** NY: Four Winds, 1977. Billy Prescott gets a $40,000 bonus for signing a baseball contract and then discovers the jealousy his manager, fans, newspapermen, and fellow players feel. He also discovers that playing minor league ball is not romantic but it's often frightening.
85. H. M. Hoover, **THE DELIKON,** NY: Viking, 1977. A science fiction tale about the Delikon, a race from the distant star who conquered Earth years ago, an invading army, and Varina, a Delikon who looks human.
86. Geoffrey Household, **ESCAPE INTO DAYLIGHT,** Boston: Little, Brown, 1976. Stumbling onto a clue to the identity of kidnappers of a film star's daughter, Mike is captured in this suspenseful adventure story.
87. Irene Hunt, **THE LOTTERY ROSE,** NY: Scribner, 1976. Young Georgie lives with his alcoholic mother in a Florida slum. Through winning a prize in a local lottery, a rosebush, he fights to escape his environment.
88. Mollie Hunter, **A SOUND OF CHARIOTS,** NY: Harper, 1972. A young girl learns about death and about life when her father dies.
89. Mollie Hunter, **A STRANGER CAME ASHORE,** NY: Harper, 1975. A young man, Finn Learson, appears on the shore of Scotland, and people wonder whether he is a real man or a seal-man.
90. Mollie Hunter, **THE STRONGHOLD,** NY: Harper, 1974. During the Iron Age in Scotland, crippled Col devises a plan of defense against the Roman invaders.
91. Mollie Hunter, **THE WICKED ONE,** NY: Harper, 1977. The Grolican, a creature from the Otherworld, torments Scottish Colin Grant and his family. They flee to America to escape in this wild and funny book.
92. Norma Johnston, **THE SANCTUARY TREE,** NY: Atheneum, 1977. When her grandfather died, Tish knew that her life would change, but she had no idea how drastic the changes would be that whole year of 1901.
93. Judith Kerr, **THE OTHER WAY ROUND,** NY: Coward, 1975. A sequel to **WHEN HITLER STOLE PINK RABBIT** continuing the life story of the family, often sparse and unpromising, during World War II.
94. Judith Kerr, **WHEN HITLER STOLE PINK RABBIT,** NY: Coward, 1972. A family flees Nazi Germany before World War II.
95. M. E. Kerr, **DINKY HOCKER SHOOTS SMACK,** NY: Harper, 1972. Dinky's social-worker mother is interested only in young people with drug problems, and she cannot understand that Dinky and Dinky's friends have some major non-drug problems.
96. M. E. Kerr, **IF I LOVE YOU, AM I TRAPPED FOREVER?** NY: Harper, 1973. Handsome, athletic Alan Bennett's world falls apart when his high school friends are first mystified and then intrigued by tall, balding Duncan Stein.
97. M. E. Kerr, **IS THAT YOU, MISS BLUE?** NY: Harper, 1975. Flanders Brown makes fun of highly religious Miss Blue until she learns that even oddballs can be human.
98. M. E. Kerr, **LOVE IS A MISSING PERSON,** NY: Harper, 1975. Suzy has a rich mother, a soon-to-be stepmother who's little more

than Suzy's age, a freaky librarian friend, and a sister Chicago, who dates a black athletic hero.

99. M. E. Kerr, **THE SON OF SOMEONE FAMOUS,** NY: Harper, 1974. The son of a world famous political leader learns that a man can't escape himself by running to a small town.
100. Norma Klein, **IT'S NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT,** NY: Pantheon, 1973. Carla rapidly learns more about life than she wants to during her 14th summer when her older brother's girlfriend becomes pregnant and her parents separate.
101. Norma Klein, **MOM, THE WOLF MAN AND ME,** NY: Pantheon, 1972. Brett prefers her present life, with her unmarried and never-married mother, and wants no part of any father.
102. R. R. Knudson, **FOX RUNNING,** NY: Harper, 1975. An Indian girl, Fox Running, tries to run for a university track team, but she ultimately discovers she must run her own way, the Indian way.
103. R. R. Knudson, **ZANBALLER,** NY: Delacorte, 1972. Zan Hagen wants to play football, not to play the "proper" role of a girl as a cheerleader, and she sets out to change her school. Knudson's **ZANBANGER** (NY: Harper, 1977) is an unsuccessful sequel in which Zan wins a court battle to play basketball on the boys' team. About as long but only about 1/100th as good.
104. Evelyn Sibley Lampman, **BARGAIN BRIDE,** NY: Atheneum, 1977. Orphaned Ginny is married off at 10 by her cousins to get rid of her and to make some money. When she is 15, her much older husband comes to take her but dies of a stroke. That makes Ginny a wealthy young widow and the object of attention/affection of numerous suitors.
105. Evelyn Sibley Lampman, **THE POTLATCH FAMILY,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. Plum feels no pride in her Indian heritage until her older brother returns from the Army and wants a great Indian feast.
106. Louise Lawrence, **SING AND SCATTER DAISIES,** NY: Harper, 1977. Nicky, 17 and quite selfish, has his life turned around when his Aunt Anna returns home dying of stomach cancer at 35.
107. Mildred Lee, **FOG,** NY: Seabury, 1972. Luke seems to have everything any 17-year-old boy could want, and then in that fall, his whole world falls apart.
108. Mildred Lee, **SYCAMORE YEAR,** NY: Lothrop, 1974. Wren Fairchild tries to help a pregnant friend, only to find her help is futile.
109. Ursula LeGuin, **THE FARTHEST SHORE,** NY: Atheneum, 1972. Third in the Earthsea Trilogy (**A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA** and **THE TOMBS OF ATUAN**), this fantasy is about the quest of Prince Arren and Archmage Ged to test ancient prophecies.
110. Ursula LeGuin, **VERY FAR AWAY FROM ANYWHERE ELSE,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. A brief tale of Owen Thomas Griffiths and Natalie Field, their dreams and their love.
111. Madeleine L'Engle, **DRAGONS IN THE WATERS,** NY: Farrar, 1976. Dr. Charles O'Keefe and his children become embroiled in a murder mystery in South America.
112. Madeleine L'Engle, **A WIND IN THE DOOR,** NY: Farrar, 1973.

The major characters of **A WRINKLE IN TIME** contact an alien being, which leads to more adventures in space.

113. Joan Lingard, **HOSTAGES TO FORTUNE,** NY: Nelson, 1977. Kevin and Sadie McCoy and their year-old son move to a small village in Wales to improve their life. When Clodagh, Kevin's sister, moves in with them, she brings her own problems and a bit of the war from Ireland.
114. Joan Lingard, **THE PILGRIMAGE,** NY: Nelson, 1976. Maggie McKinley and her boyfriend James Fraser plan a bicycle trip to Maggie's ancestral home. On the way, James' fondness for Maggie changes and he starts acting as if he owned her.
115. Joan Lingard, **THE RESETTLING,** NY: Nelson, 1975. After Maggie McKinley convinces her father to open his own plumbing shop, she finds she must do far more to make the Glasgow shop a going proposition than she had expected.
116. Robert Lipsyte, **ONE FAT SUMMER,** NY: Harper, 1977. Bobby Marks is so fat he's not sure he can survive his job taking care of Dr. Kahn's lawn. That one summer he not only loses weight but several illusions about people he admired.
117. Ronald Lockley, **SEAL-WOMAN,** NY: Bradbury, 1974. Based on an Irish legend about a young man who loves a woman who is seal-like and not really of this world.
118. Carol Lee Lorenzo, **HEART-OF-SNOWBIRD,** NY: Harper, 1975. Laurel Ivy's small southern town is rocked when an Indian family moves in. A young Indian Hank becomes Laurel's friend and helps her to see her town and herself more clearly.
119. Katie Letcher Lyle, **FAIR DAY, AND ANOTHER STEP BEGUN,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1974. Ellen Burd pursues the boy who has made her pregnant in an especially moving and poetic novel.
120. Winifred Madison, **BIRD ON THE WING,** Boston: Little, Brown, 1974. Elizabeth longs to leave her dowdy stepmother in Lincoln, Nebraska, and to return to her mother in Sacramento. When she runs away, she meets Maija, an unusual weaver.
121. Peggy Mann, **THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF TROUBLE,** NY: Doubleday, 1977. Robbie may have thought his bicycle accident was a poor way to start summer, but it seemed insignificant when he learned his mother was dying of cancer.
122. Sharon Bell Mathis, **LISTEN FOR THE FIG TREE,** NY: Viking, 1974. Muffin Johnson has adjusted to her own blindness. Her mother's drinking and the Black African celebration, Kwanza, worry her even more.
123. Sharon Bell Mathis, **TEACUP FULL OF ROSES,** NY: Viking, 1972. A black mother dotes on her oldest son's talents as a painter and brings about a family tragedy as he becomes involved with drugs.
124. Harry Mazer, **THE DOLLAR MAN,** NY: Delacorte, 1973. Raised by his mother, Marcus decides to seek out a father he does not know.
125. Harry Mazer, **SNOW BOUND,** NY: Delacorte, 1973. Spoiled Tony Laporte runs off in his mother's car and picks up a girl hitchhiker. Showing off, he wrecks the car, and they must fend for themselves in a storm.

126. Norma Fox Mazer, **DEAR BILL, REMEMBER ME? AND OTHER STORIES,** NY: Delacorte, 1976. Stories of love and growing up and the ambivalence of young people in or out of love, beautifully written.
127. Norma Fox Mazer, **A FIGURE OF SPEECH,** NY: Delacorte, 1973. Jenny deeply loves her grandfather, and when her family tries to move him out of the house, Jenny and grandfather try to make it on their own.
128. Norma Fox Mazer, **SATURDAY, THE TWELFTH OF OCTOBER,** NY: Delacorte, 1975. Fourteen-year-old Zan Ford is time-warped from New York City back to the Stone Age.
129. Norma Fox Mazer and Harry Mazer, **THE SOLID GOLD KID,** NY: Delacorte, 1977. Five teenagers are kidnapped in this story of terror and suspense by two superb writers.
130. Anne McCaffrey, **DRAGONSINGER,** NY: Atheneum, 1977. Menolly and her fire lizards on the planet Pern come to Harper Hall to be tested by the Masterharper.
131. Anne McCaffrey, **DRAGONSONG,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. Menolly's abilities are derided by her father, so she flees to caves where the fire lizards live in this science fiction story.
132. Elois Jarvis McGraw, **A REALLY WEIRD SUMMER,** NY: Atheneum, 1977. Four children spend a summer in an old house. Nels, 12, finds a ghost, Alan, who takes power over Nels while ten-year-old Stevie tries to save her.
133. Robert McKay, **SKEAN,** Nashville: Nelson, 1976. Skean is a 114-year-old ornithologist who discovers he's a middleman in a gigantic game played by two formidable opponents, Gage and Blake.
134. Patricia A. McKillip, **THE FORGOTTEN BEASTS OF ELD,** NY: Atheneum, 1974. Daughter of a wizard, Sybel finds human understanding and love when a baby is left with her to care for and love.
135. Patricia A. McKillip, **THE RIDDLE-MASTER OF HED,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. Morgon is not only a prince of Hed, he is also a fine college student, and he carries on him and in him mystical elements. A fine book of fantasy.
136. Nicholasa Mohr, **NILDA,** NY: Harper, 1973. Nilda's life in New York City's El Barrio from 1941 to 1945, her Puerto Rican family, and their lives. Episodic but beautiful.
137. Don Moser, **A HEART TO THE HAWKS,** NY: Atheneum, 1975. A young boy comes of age in Cleveland.
138. Walter Dean Myers, **FAST SAM, COOL CLYDE, AND STUFF,** NY: Viking, 1975. Eighteen-year-old Stuff thinks back on his youth and rumbles and deaths and sports, all in a surprisingly funny book.
139. Sharon Newman, **DAGDA'S HARP,** NY: St. Martins, 1976. Young Michael, apprentice Druid, becomes a central figure in a quest to save his people and find the supernatural harp of Dagda. Based on Irish legends.
140. John Ney, **OX UNDER PRESSURE,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1976. Rich kid Ox Olmstead becomes involved with mixed-up Arabella Marlborough in this third book about Ox.
141. Ruth Nichols, **SONG OF THE PEARL,** NY: Atheneum, 1976.

Margaret Redmond's death is only the beginning of her existence as she discovers all of her previous reincarnations.

142. Andre Norton, **WRAITHS OF TIME,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. Tally, a young black archaeologist, is transported back in time to the Nubian Kingdom of Meroe where she is forced to impersonate a princess.
143. Robert C. O'Brien, **Z FOR ZACHARIAH,** NY: Atheneum, 1975. A 16-year-old girl in Pennsylvania after a nuclear war.
144. Scott O'Dell, **CHILD OF FIRE,** Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974. Manuel must act out his manhood to impress his girlfriend and keep his leadership in his gang, the Conquistadores.
145. Scott O'Dell, **THE HAWK THAT DARE NOT HUNT BY DAY,** Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975. Set in the time of Tyndale's translation of the Bible into English, Tom Barton and his Uncle Jack, a smuggler, are caught up in Tyndale's problems.
146. Scott O'Dell, **ZIA,** Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976. A continuation of **ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS** told by Zia, niece of the heroine of the earlier book.
147. Doris Orgel, **A CERTAIN MAGIC,** NY: Dial, 1976. A young American girl finds a 1938 journal of her Aunt Trudl and tries to relive her aunt's past and her aunt's escape from the Nazis.
148. Richard Peck, **ARE YOU IN THE HOUSE ALONE?,** NY: Viking, 1976. A young girl's usual problems with her family and her friends pale when she begins to receive obscene letters and phone calls. One night she finds Phil at the door, he beats and then rapes her, and then her problems really begin.
149. Richard Peck, **DON'T LOOK AND IT WON'T HURT,** NY: Holt, 1972. Carol Patterson wants to help her older sister when Ellen becomes pregnant, but she learns that one can only help oneself.
150. Richard Peck, **THE GHOST BELONGED TO ME,** NY: Viking, 1975. Alexander finally believes in the reality of Inez Dumaine's ghost and sets out to get justice and put the world aright.
151. Robert Newton Peck, **A DAY NO PIGS WOULD DIE,** NY: Knopf, 1972. Rob learns about love and death, intertwined and separate, through his love for his father and his pet pig during the Depression.
152. Robert Newton Peck, **HANG FOR TREASON,** NY: Doubleday, 1976. A family divides, an older Tory generation and a younger American Patriot generation, and the conflict tears the family apart.
153. K. M. Peyton, **PENNINGTON'S HEIR,** NY: Crowell, 1973. Having served a nine-month sentence for knocking down a policeman, Patrick Pennington returns to society. Then his girl gets pregnant and once more his plans to become a concert pianist become muddied. Third in a series (**PENNINGTON'S LAST TERM** and **THE BEETHOVEN MEDAL**).
154. Joan Phipson, **THE CATS,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. Kidnapped and taken far into central Australia, Jim and Willy find themselves and their kidnappers trapped by a band of domestic cats gone wild.
155. Kin Platt, **HEADMAN,** NY: Morrow, 1975. A leader in a Los Angeles gang tries vainly to break out of his world.

156. Josephine Poole, **TOUCH AND GO,** NY: Harper, 1976. First, Emily is hurt in an auto accident; then, she wanders into the wrong hospital room and sees something strange; and finally, a young man asks her where she would put a bomb if she wanted to blow up the Naval College.
157. Elizabeth Marie Pope, **THE PERILOUS GARD,** Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974. During the 16th century, Katie Sutton is sent to live in Elvewood Hall, the source of many strange stories and rumors.
158. Johanna Reiss, **THE UPSTAIRS ROOM,** NY: Crowell, 1972. An autobiographical novel about the author's own life as a Dutch Jew when her family went into hiding during World War II.
159. Johanna Reiss, **THE JOURNEY BACK,** NY: Crowell, 1976. A sequel to **THE UPSTAIRS ROOM** carrying Annie's story into the postwar years.
160. Colby F. Rodowsky, **WHAT ABOUT ME?** NY: Watts, 1976. Dorrie feels ambivalent about Fred, her Mongoloid brother. Then her family decides to move so he will have more professional help, and Dorrie must leave all her friends behind.
161. Winifred Rosen, **CRUISIN FOR A BRUISIN,** NY: Knopf, 1976. Thirteen-year-old Winnie is curious and concerned about her feelings and her body, and she sets out on some sexual escapades.
162. Arthur Roth, **THE ICEBERG HERMIT,** NY: Four Winds, 1974. Allen Gordon is shipwrecked in the Arctic and lives for seven years by his own wits.
163. Arthur Roth, **THE SECRET LOVER OF ELMTREE,** NY: Four Winds, 1976. Greg loves his small town life, even if he is adopted. Then his real father appears and Greg's life changes.
164. Marilyn Sachs, **A POCKET OF SEEDS,** NY: Doubleday, 1972. Nicole is fortunately absent when her Jewish family is taken by the Nazis in 1943.
165. Don Schellie, **ME, CHOLAY & COMPANY: APACHE WARRIORS,** NY: Four Winds, 1973. Seventeen-year-old Joshua travels to the Arizona territory in 1850 and there finds himself in charge of six Apache children pursued by a band of Apache-hating white men.
166. Jennifer Schneider, **THE DAYBREAK MAN,** NY: Harper, 1975. Young Lita flees her barren and impoverished Appalachian home for a life in a city full of people and things she does not understand.
167. Sandra Scoppettone, **THE LATE GREAT ME,** NY: Putnam, 1976. Geri Peters, 17, is well on her way to becoming an alcoholic.
168. Sandra Scoppettone, **TRYING HARD TO HEAR YOU,** NY: Harper, 1974. Teenagers mock two homosexual boys while other teenagers stand by silent and unprotesting.
169. William Sleator, **HOUSE OF STAIRS,** NY: Dutton, 1974. Five orphans are taken to a white-tiled house of stairs and conditioned into vicious acts against each other.
170. Zilpha Keatley Snyder, **AND ALL BETWEEN,** NY: Atheneum, 1976. Terra escapes from Erda only to put her new-found friends in great danger in this second volume of a fantasy beginning with **BELOW THE ROOT.**

171. Ivan Southall, **WHAT ABOUT TOMORROW?** NY: Macmillan, 1977. A young Australian World War II pilot is shot down, and his whole life is replayed as he plummets to earth.
172. John Steptoe, **MARCIA,** NY: Viking, 1976. Fifteen-year-old Marcia is confused about sex and afraid of losing her boyfriend Danny and irritated that women have to take the responsibility for birth control.
173. Mary Q. and William O. Steele, **THE EYE IN THE FOREST,** NY: Dutton, 1975. Kontu and his people search for the Sacred Eye of his tribe in a setting of Pre-Columbian America.
174. Mary Stolz, **CAT IN THE MIRROR,** NY: Harper, 1975. Erin lives in modern New York City and Irun lives in ancient Egypt yet they are halves of the same girl.
175. Mary Stolz, **THE EDGE OF NEXT YEAR,** NY: Harper, 1974. Fourteen-year-old Orin watches as his mother's death leads to a near disintegration of his family.
176. Mary Stolz, **LEAP BEFORE YOU LOOK,** NY: Harper, 1972. Jimmie Gavin loves her parents so deeply her world falls apart when they announce their plan to divorce.
177. Catherine Storr, **THE CHINESE EGG,** NY: McGraw-Hill, 1975. Three children help police find kidnappers in a taut and mystical mystery.
178. Catherine Storr, **THURSDAY,** NY: Harper, 1972. Bee learns that a boy befriended by her family is now in a mental home.
179. Mildred D. Taylor, **ROLL OF THUNDER, HEAR MY CRY,** NY: Dial, 1976. A warm and close black family shows its strength against racism and bad times during the Depression.
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182. Theodore Taylor, **THE ODYSSEY OF BEN O'NEAL,** NY: Doubleday, 1977. Young Ben goes to Norfolk to set to sea and find his brother Reuben.
183. Colin Thiele, **FIGHT AGAINST ALBATROSS TWO,** NY: Harper, 1974. A town divides in its feeling about Albatross Two, a giant oil rig off Australia, and then the oil rig blows out.
184. Colin Thiele, **FIRE IN THE STONE,** NY: Harper, 1974. Two boys in an Australian mining town discover a jewel thief.
185. Colin Thiele, **THE HAMMERHEAD LIGHT,** NY: Harper, 1977. Twelve-year-old Tessa tries to save Hammerhead Light, a lighthouse, from destruction by bureaucrats.
186. John Rowe Townsend, **NOAH'S CASTLE,** Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1975. Mr. Mortimer shocks his family by suddenly announcing a move to a new and very strange house.
187. R. G. Vliet, **ROCKSPRING,** NY: Viking, 1974. Jennie is kidnapped and taken to the mountains for a long and cold winter.
188. Jill Paton Walsh, **UNLEAVING,** NY: Farrar, 1976. Madge Field-

ing shares her house with some students and two university professors. Their sterile discussions are contrasted with the energy and living, not talking, of Patrick and Madge.

189. Rosemary Wells, **NONE OF THE ABOVE,** NY: Dial, 1974. Plump Marcia competes with an attractive and slender stepsister when her father remarries.
190. Barbara Wersba, **TUNES FOR A SMALL HARMONICA,** NY: Harper, 1976. Teenage J. F. McAllister smokes too much and has no purpose in life. Then she falls in love with her poetry teacher, Harold Murth, supposedly unmarried and poor.
191. Robb White, **DEATHWATCH,** NY: Doubleday, 1972. Ben earns money guiding hunters. Coldblooded Modec expects Ben to help him cover up a murder, and when Ben refuses, Modec becomes Ben's hunter.
192. Brenda Wilkerson, **LUDELL & WILLIE,** NY: Harper, 1977. Ludell, a black girl in rural Georgia, resents white folks, loves Willie Johnson, and worries with him about their future after they graduate from high school. Sequel to **LUDELL.**
193. Patricia Windsor, **DIVING FOR ROSES,** NY: Harper, 1976. Seventeen-year-old Jean and her apparently mad mother, Deidre, live alone, almost recluses. Then a man enters Jean's life.
194. Patricia Windsor, **THE SUMMER BEFORE,** NY: Harper, 1973. Sandy slowly recovers from the impact of her closest friend's death.
195. Gene Wolfe, **THE DEVIL IN A FOREST,** Chicago: Follett, 1976. In medieval times, Mark lives in a small forest village beset by attacks of Wat, the Wayfarer, who steals and murders for fun.
196. Hilma Wolitzer, **OUT OF LOVE,** NY: Farrar, 1976. Teddy Hecht, 14, determines to reunite her family after her parents' divorce.
197. Laurence Yep, **CHILD OF THE OWL,** NY: Harper, 1977. When Casey goes to live with her grandmother in San Francisco, she learns what her Chinese heritage is all about.
198. Laurence Yep, **DRAGONWINGS,** NY: Harper, 1975. A son goes from China in 1909 to join his father in San Francisco, a father consumed with the desire to build a powered airplane.
199. Laurence Yep, **SWEETWATER,** NY: Harper, 1973. The Priest family, descendents of a colony from Earth many years before, live in Commune, a city on and in the sea. A novel about ecology and philosophy and all things rich and worthwhile.
200. Paul Zindel, **PARDON ME, YOU'RE STEPPING ON MY EYEBALL!** NY: Harper, 1976. Marsh Mellow hates everyone and everything, especially school. Then in Edna Shinglebox he feels he has found the kindred soul who will help him free his father from a California mental home. No **PIGMAN,** but then what is?

Comprehension Is Comprehension, Is . . .

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I am continually surprised by what my three-year-old grandson and six-month-old granddaughter can comprehend. Eric not only understands messages that are sent to him and responds appropriately, he also understands very subtle wordplay. Moreover, he is usually accurate in assessing a speaker's intent. He knows from the situation, the message, the tone, and facial expressions when the speaker is serious, playful, or disinterested. His little sister, Kelly, understands extended hands as an invitation to be held and the word "no" as a rebuke. The range of things she understands even at six months is truly amazing.

The intent of that reporting is not to brag about how intelligent my grandchildren are. Probably ninety-five percent of all children at their ages can and do comprehend the same kinds of things. Rather, my intent is to show what we all know from experience — namely, that even very young children have all the skills or abilities needed for comprehension of verbal and non-verbal messages. Given the nature of human intelligence, we constantly acquire and store up information and make useful associations even from birth. As we grow, our accumulated knowledge and the associations we make enable us to comprehend more and more of what we encounter. The ability to comprehend is part of the human endowment. It is limited only by our knowledge and the associative categories we have put that knowledge into in order to make it retrievable and useful.

For some baffling reason, many reading experts seem to ignore that fact. Nearly every reading methods text contains a section on developing reading comprehension skills which stresses such things as teaching how to find the main idea, how to make inferences, how to recognize time sequence, and how to follow directions. The suggestions for teaching those skills appear to be based on the assumptions that those skills and abilities are unique to reading and that they are like muscles that get stronger with repeated exercise. Skim any reading workbook and you'll find page after page of exercises designed to give practice in using various comprehension skills. You'll find little attention given to having students conceptualize

what they're being asked to do. *Doing* is the important thing, it seems, and practice will make perfect.

In reading, as in so many other realms of human behavior, it is people's ***won't,*** not their will, that prevails and forces change; and as more and more students simply refuse to read because the activity brings them neither more power nor pleasure, those of us concerned with teaching reading have been forced to re-think the reading process. As a result of that, there is emerging a new awareness that the skills or abilities involved in processing information on the printed page are not significantly different from those needed to process information which comes via other media. Those skills or abilities which infants use to process the stimuli that we present to them are exactly the same skills or abilities they will need to process the printed page.

As teachers of reading, we need to make our students aware of that fact. Too often, students, faced with the task of reading, assume that nothing they have done before in their lives is going to be of any help to them in that situation — not even the previous reading of similar material. That fact was documented by a recent doctoral student of mine, Kathleen Ngandu, who studied the reading strategies of a group of high school students who were assigned to the reading lab for remedial instruction. Over half of them had no patterned way of reading any kind of writing. To them, each selection they read was like a new puzzle to be solved. Those who did have a pattern or strategy, used it whatever the selection, whether it helped them read more efficiently or not. Ngandu's students had little or no notion of where to look for the main idea, how to determine the writer's intent, or how to read for details — even though they had been asked to do those things hundreds of times before by teachers using exercise after exercise. The most consistent thing they did was react affectively to a topic: if it appealed to them, they tried to answer the questions; if it didn't, they either gave up or guessed.

Their response to reading was global. What they had stored up in their memories were global negative reactions to the act of reading as a result of the repeated failures they had experienced with the task. If only they had known that they were only being asked to do the same things they did when they spoke, or listened to someone speak, or even watched television! In those contexts they had had innumerable successful experiences getting the main idea, sensing the sender's intent, and noting details. The only difference is that the printed page presents a different set of cues to attend to.

In order to help students realize that, the approach to reading in general and reading comprehension in particular has to be highly

cognitive. More than anything else, the goal of reading instruction should be knowledge of how the printed page works. Students need to know what signs and symbols to process in order to use the comprehension ability they already possess.

Since teaching should always proceed from the known to the unknown, the first step the teacher must take in order to improve reading comprehension is to devise ways that will bring to the students' conscious level those things they have learned from their past experiences about comprehending messages. The most simple and direct method is to ask questions such as the following about those experiences: How do you decide whether or not to trust what a stranger tells you? When your parents told you to do something, how did you know how serious they were about your doing it? Did you use the same words and approach to get something from your mother that you used with your father? What things do you notice in a strange place that give you clues as to how you should act? How is talking on the telephone different from talking to someone face to face? Since a lot of times people ask questions without expecting an answer, how do you know when that is the case? How do you know when the actors in a TV comedy want you to laugh? When you found something that you owned missing, how did you decide what happened to it?

Another easy way to bring students' comprehension knowledge to the surface is to put them in various role-playing situations. Let them be movie directors discussing ways to make a picture they are working on more suspenseful. Using a newspaper report of a recent court verdict, let them re-enact the way they think the trial must have gone. Teenagers being stopped by the police for speeding, magazine editors trying to decide on the sequence of articles or stories to be included in the next issue, salespeople trying to convince consumers that their products really are the best, and greeting card makers trying to decide which colors are best for different occasions are all roles that students could play which would force them to bring what they have learned in the past to bear on the present.

Putting students in a situation where they have to come up with a product could work to the same end. Having them decorate the classroom to create a certain mood or impression is an example of such a product. So, too, is having them take pictures that express various moods. They might also arrange pictures in a variety of chronological orders. Having them compile mood, theme, or topic kits in which they include pictures, stories, objects or whatever pertains to their particular subject would also help to make what they know about comprehension conscious.

The consciousness that needs to be reached through such activities is mainly that they do identify, recognize, and interpret a variety of signs and symbols before they act or react. Each new action or reaction is usually based on attention — however unconscious — to those same signs and symbols they have learned to give significance to in the past. When their actions are successful, they have probably noted the important signs and symbols and interpreted them correctly. When they were unsuccessful, it was probably because they failed to note the old signs or symbols or didn't recognize them in a new context. In other words, their comprehension of the situation was based on incomplete recognition or inaccurate interpretation of the signs and symbols that were cues to meaning.

Those may seem like very sophisticated concepts for students to deal with, but they really aren't. To begin with, they aren't new to secondary students. I discovered when working with junior high students that they knew those things in the sense that they operated on them in their daily lives, but they hadn't put the concepts into words or formulated conscious strategies for using them in new situations. The questions, the role-playing situations, and the product-oriented activities mentioned earlier serve to bring their knowledge to the surface where it can be verbalized. It takes time, but it is a necessary first step toward improving comprehension of the printed page.

Once students have begun to be aware of their learned ways of processing information in non-print contexts, they should be given a variety of print materials and asked to figure out how those same processes can work for them in comprehending what's contained in those materials. Asking them first to look for non-word features that might signal something would be a good place to start. With time, they will note that space distribution and allotment appear to be significant. The margins around the page, the space between the paragraphs, the amount of space various paragraphs take, and the indentations at the beginnings of paragraphs all could signal something about the meaning of the text contained on the page. Working with a set of printed materials, they can begin to generalize the kind of meaning those features might signal. When they have reached tentative conclusions about that, they should be urged to find signs comparable to space utilization that they have encountered in other media. Questions like these would help them: In speech, what's comparable to the indentation of a paragraph? What device do cartoonists use to signal the end of an episode or event? In what ways do graphic artists and writers use space similarly?

Later the students' attention could be directed to print features such as style of print, size of print, and darkness of print to see what meanings they might signal. Again, they should be asked to generalize about conclusions they could draw if suddenly a word or two in the text appears in a different kind of print. Then they could try to identify devices used in other media to draw attention to certain words. Hopefully, they will begin to see that they can comprehend a lot about a page of print without even reading a word.

Then their attention should be directed toward punctuation, function words, sentence length, and sentence variety as possible cues to meaning. Finally they should consider the grammatical, syntactical, semantic, and rhetorical cues to meaning they can find in a variety of texts. Throughout these investigations they should be forced to point out parallel or comparable signs and symbols in other media and to generalize about how they interpret those cues in those other media. The object, of course, is to have them arrive at an awareness of how the printed page works and how its workings compare and contrast with other media. The comprehension strategies they have learned to use with other media should then serve them when they read. Having realized that, they will comprehend what they read much more quickly, efficiently, and enjoyably. And more than that, they will know how to comprehend more of any situation they find themselves in because they will be able to bring more of their native comprehension ability to bear.

Assessing Literature-Related Skills

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Reading is the core of most subject matter areas at every level of schooling. At primary levels, instruction in developmental reading is emphasized. The main goals of developmental reading activities are the acquisition and improvement of reading skills. In other words, a successful developmental reading program helps students learn to read.

By the middle elementary grades, another type of reading assumes instructional prominence: functional or study-type reading. The major purpose of functional reading is the acquisition of information; that is, a successful functional reading program helps

students read to learn. A third type of reading, recreational reading, includes those activities that have enjoyment or appreciation as their primary aims. Instruction and practice in these three types of reading should be present at all levels of schooling.

As students progress through middle school and high school, their required reading increases both in amount and in difficulty. Growth in developmental reading at the secondary level has traditionally been the responsibility of the reading teacher, when there has been a reading teacher. However, secondary students often need guidance in learning how to adapt their reading skills to the study requirements of their different courses. As Harris and Sipay point out in their book (page 78): "Guidance in functional reading is the responsibility of every subject-matter teacher, since efficient learning requires different reading patterns in science, mathematics, history, and other subjects."

Although reading instruction and the study of literature are usually included as part of the language arts, they are actually different processes. The reading teacher's curriculum is a set of reading skills and attitudes. Material for reading instruction is generally selected for its appeal to students' interests and/or for its potential to provide guidance in the skill(s) being taught. The reading teacher, then, is stressing the development of *processes* rather than the *content* of material.

The curriculum of the literature teacher, on the other hand, is a set of ideas or understandings about literature. Reading material for literature class may be chosen because it contains information or ideas that students should encounter, understand, and apply. Thus, the literature teacher is more concerned with the development of content and ideas than with the sequential development of reading skills.

While instruction in reading and literature clearly differs, many skills developed in reading classes can and should be adapted to the study of literature. Understanding the author's message is often a prerequisite to appreciating it. Comprehending a literary selection frequently requires the ability to understand symbolism, allegory, metaphor, or other literary conventions. Except as the craft of writing is explored, there is little technical vocabulary associated with the study of literature. However, since authors choose each word carefully, successful readers of literature must be able to understand fine shades of difference among the denotations and connotations of similar words. Shepherd (1973) lists several basic comprehension skills pertinent to the study of literature. These are the abilities to: 1) read sentences of all types, 2) develop scope and

depth of vocabulary, 3) note and be able to summarize main ideas, 4) note and recall pertinent details, 5) see the author's purpose, 6) recognize plot structure, and 7) be aware of sequence.

If understanding is a prerequisite to appreciation, the literature teacher should have knowledge of student competence with these basic comprehension skills. The teacher should also be aware of the general reading ability of students and the approximate difficulty level of the material to be studied. This information can aid in developing an appropriate instructional program in literature.

Knowledge about a student's general level of reading achievement may be obtained from several sources. Skillful observation is a potent diagnostic tool; a student's classroom behavior and performance can provide clues about reading ability. In addition, most schools periodically administer group achievement tests which include subtests of reading ability. While such a test score is not definitive and should not be used to establish a student's instructional reading level, it may be regarded as a rough estimate of reading ability.

Several different methods can be employed to estimate the difficulty of literary samples. The teacher who has had several years' experience at a certain grade level can usually form a rough estimate of difficulty by examining the selection carefully. Vocabulary, complexity of syntactic structures, and concept load should be considered in evaluating a selection's difficulty.

To replace or supplement informal estimates, the teacher may wish to apply a readability formula to the selection. (See bibliography.) The Dale-Chall Formula provides an estimate of the difficulty of a selection based upon average sentence length and number of difficult words. Fry's Readability Graph is based on the number of words and syllables in a 100-word sample from the selection. Each formula is explained thoroughly in the sources noted above. In addition, the teacher might also consult published sources, such as those by Roos and Walker, which provide readability estimates for many books.

Perhaps one of the most efficient ways to assess student competence with those reading skills relating to the study of literature is to develop a group reading inventory (GRI), a diagnostic device based upon material to be read and studied by the students. The purpose of a teacher-made GRI is to gain an indication of student competence with a particular text or group of skills. For example, a group reading inventory can assess a student's ability to: 1) use context clues for word meaning, 2) note main ideas and/or pertinent details, 3) draw conclusions, and 4) use textbook locational aids.

Rakes suggests several advantages of using GRI's as diagnostic tools for content area instruction. Because they are based on material the students will study, group reading inventories provide immediate and pertinent diagnostic information. In addition, GRI's can easily become teaching instruments. As student responses are discussed in class, informal teaching may clarify some concepts. For example, an entire lesson need not be devoted to explaining the difference between a table of contents and an index; a simple explanation related to some GRI questions might suffice. Finally, GRI's can aid a student's self-appraisal. Similar tests can be administered throughout the school year so that both students and teacher can chart progress.

Constructing a GRI is a relatively simple task. First, the teacher should examine the text or reading selection to determine those skills necessary for successful understanding of the material. Questions pertaining to these skills are then formulated. While a teacher's first attempt at GRI construction may take some time, subsequent inventories will probably be easier to devise. A group reading inventory based upon a literature text should probably contain two major sections: some questions testing the student's ability to use locational aids and some questions diagnosing the student's ability to read and understand a selection from the text.

Students should be given several opportunities to use the text's locational/organizational aids. Questions in this section of the GRI should tap the student's ability to use the table of contents, index, glossary, biographical data section, and any other locational/organizational aids provided by the text's authors. Sample questions might include the following: On what page does Unit _____ begin? On what pages could you find poems written by _____? According to the glossary, what does _____ mean? When was _____ born?

The second section of a literature GRI should assess the student's ability to read and understand a passage from the text. The passage chosen for this portion of the GRI should be about four pages long, representative of the difficulty of the book, and fairly independent; that is, comprehension of the passage should not be too heavily dependent upon information found on preceding or following pages. Although questions posed may depend somewhat upon the nature of the passage, the teacher may wish to include at least four types of questions:

1. Vocabulary. Students might be asked to provide definitions for three or four words from the passage. Words chosen should be adequately explained within the context of the passage.

2. Main Idea. These questions should require students to explain some main points of the passage.
3. Details. These questions might ask for the recall of specific information relating to principal characters or main ideas presented in the passage.
4. Conclusions. The answers to these questions should *not* be included within the passage. These questions should tap the student's ability to synthesize data by drawing conclusions or making predictions about the selection.

The administration and scoring of a GRI is uncomplicated and quick; both these tasks can probably be accomplished during a typical class period. Prior to testing, students should understand the purpose and nature of the GRI. They should realize that the GRI is *not* a test in the usual sense of the word, but rather an opportunity for both themselves and the teacher to see if they will be able to read their literature texts successfully. The students should also, of course, be urged to do their best.

Questions assessing the ability to use locational/organizational aids should be asked first. Students should be allowed to use their texts during this portion of the GRI; in addition, page references should be provided, if necessary. After they have completed this section of the GRI, students should read the four-page selection from the text. Whether or not students should be allowed to consult the text as they answer questions about the reading selection depends upon classroom instructional strategies. If students will be expected to discuss selections in class without referring to the text, they should complete the questions in this part of the GRI without consulting the text. If classroom instruction will frequently involve some rereading, students might be allowed to use the text as they answer questions about the reading selection. In other words, this portion of the GRI should reflect actual classroom practice as closely as possible.

The results of a GRI can indicate a student's overall competence with the text, as well as potential areas of strength and weakness. Because of their informal nature, GRI's should not be used to establish grade levels for individual students. Nonetheless, the following percentages may be used as rough guidelines: the text may be too easy for anyone scoring above 90% and too difficult for anyone scoring below 65%. If the material is suitable for instructional purposes, scores should be in the 65%-90% range. Students scoring above 90% or below 65% should be retested individually so that a more accurate diagnosis can be made.

The same criteria can be used to diagnose specific skill areas.

Students might need additional testing if they answer more than one third of the questions about a specific skill incorrectly. It should be noted that questions of too general or specific a nature may invalidate the above criteria. If the teacher is in doubt about the appropriateness of the questions after the GRI has been administered, another passage should be selected and a set of questions devised.

Surveying the student's ability to comprehend assigned reading is a prerequisite to successful teaching. Perhaps the easiest way to assess this ability is to construct a test using instructional materials from the course. A group reading inventory can be a practical diagnostic tool for assessing literature-related reading skills.

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Readability Works for the Classroom Teacher

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Classroom teachers at all levels of instruction use textbooks or other materials that require students to read. If one asked teachers to identify the approximate difficulty levels of their materials, some responses might vary from a shrug through several degrees of confusion. Mrs. Hunt, a primary grade teacher, might say that the basal reader used with one of her reading groups is of second grade difficulty because the publisher has identified this particular book as appropriate for second graders. She might be surprised and express disbelief if she were told that some of the selections in the second grade reader were actually at a fourth grade level of difficulty. Mr. Anderson, a seventh grade social studies teacher, might also be surprised if he were told that some of the selections in his textbook were of ninth or tenth grade difficulty.

More often than not, statements such as the above express a deplorable but verifiable truth: books frequently have difficulty levels beyond the grade levels for which they were prepared. Research studies (2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15) overwhelmingly support this view.

The process of judging the difficulty of books involves the concept of *readability*. Although readability is not an easily defined concept, it can be regarded as an *estimate* of a book's difficulty (1). Factors frequently used to estimate readability are sentence length and word length or complexity.

Readability, or difficulty level, can be estimated by a variety of means. Mrs. Hunt relied on the publisher's estimate for her assumption of readability. Mr. Anderson might have used his professional judgment to estimate the difficulty level of the book used in his classroom. Both teachers might also have consulted sources (6, 12) which contain readability estimates of books frequently used in classrooms. In many instances, readability formulas are used in making such estimates.

Readability formulas can be an important help to classroom teachers. There are over thirty in existence. All of them are rough estimates and subject to error; that is, the results obtained by applying a readability formula are not absolute. Although the application of a readability formula may indicate that a particular

book has a difficulty level of fifth grade, this level should be regarded as approximate. The book may be easier than fifth grade level in some parts and harder than fifth grade level in other parts; nevertheless, the average difficulty or readability is fifth grade. Teachers who understand the concept of readability will either avoid reading materials that are too difficult or provide special assistance to help their students cope with problematic material.

Several years ago teachers in middle schools and high schools observed that many of their students expressed considerable interest in reading *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. Students who normally did not read much were reading this book. It can be said, of course, that the photographs and general format of the book make it attractive and stimulating. This is true; however, when six different pages in the book were subjected to measures of readability, another important factor emerged: the average readability of *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* is sixth grade level. None of the passages is more difficult than seventh grade level and two of the passages are rated as fifth grade readability. Teachers who wish to use *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* may find this information on readability useful. In fact, teachers can make better use of any book when they have readability data at their command.

Toward this end, a group of textbooks (see attached list) and supplementary materials were evaluated for readability. The Fry formula (3, 4, 7) was used to determine this readability data. Although it is possible that errors exist in some of the results, it is assumed that the calculations represent approximate difficulty levels for the books examined. Following each title are numbers or notations that represent the approximate difficulty levels of samples from the book. For example, there were six samples evaluated for readability in *This Is America's Story*. The six samples ranged from grade six to grade eleven in difficulty.

If you would like to estimate the readability of books used in your classroom, the Fry formula (7) can provide the information in a matter of minutes. You will then be in a position to decide if the books you use for instructional purposes are of appropriate difficulty for your students (9). It is important to remember, however, that readability represents only a portion of the factors that determine the difficulty of a book for a given student. The student's motivation, background of experiences, and interests must also be taken into account. Of all these factors, readability is the most important because no amount of interest and desire can make a passage readable to the student who cannot translate the decoded language into meaningful concepts.

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Personalizing a Reading Vocabulary

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When students are asked to personalize their vocabulary improvement, a big step can be taken toward a life-long informal program of vocabulary acquisition. All students have developed to some extent a reading vocabulary, a listening vocabulary, a speaking vocabulary, and a writing vocabulary. These vocabularies differ in their size and scope, and their level of sophistication depends on both the student's previous instruction and, most importantly, on his experiential background. It is important for the high school teacher to acknowledge the student's levels of vocabulary development in relation to other students and to draw upon the student's experiences as an unending source of new words.

Most good readers try to avoid running to the dictionary every time a new or unusual word is encountered in print. Rather, the context surrounding the word and the structure and function of the word itself are examined for clues for unlocking meaning. Or the reader may simply ask someone if he knows the word. Finally, the reader may find he must use the dictionary, but only after several other strategies have been tried. In the statement, *She used a morglup to comb her hair,* the nonsense word *morglup* is easily defined in general terms as some type of comb or brush. This may be all the reader needs to comprehend the idea and move ahead in the reading. Helping a student understand context clues (and augmenting deficient word-analysis skills) can only help the student become more independent in his vocabulary development. Whatever approach is used in a vocabulary program, emphasis on the use of the word in context is of primary importance.

Recent research indicates that seeing a word and having it pronounced are of great importance to future recognition of the word, vocabulary growth, and rate and comprehension development. Even if the meaning for the word is forgotten or never fully learned, seeing and hearing the word in context prepares a student for more skillful handling of the word the next time it is encountered. The most skillful reader may know how to say, spell, and syllabicate *egregious,* for example, but does not attach meaning to it until it is encountered in context. A broad familiarity with many words — words actually used by writers or speakers — would seem more advantageous to a student than a quickly forgotten list of isolated words he *should* know.

A student should be encouraged to listen for unfamiliar words being used each day in his classes, at home, or on the television and radio. These are real words being used by real people in real life, not just "this week's list." A student can use the context of the word or simply ask the speaker or someone nearby to attach meaning to the word in order to add immediately to his vocabulary. If these words are recorded and taught to the class by the student, an ever-increasing pool of words encountered by the students can be developed. With allowances for some rules of the game, such as avoiding technical words rarely encountered, this pool of words is usually quite sophisticated. The teacher's desire for a developmental program and the student's desire for relevancy are satisfied. Most importantly, some new habits of careful listening and observation which may serve the student for years to come are informally established.

The "New Word" sheet is one way in which teachers can help students establish life-long vocabulary acquisition skills. This simple form is a way to get students to pay attention to new words they are encountering and a way to provide a structure for a formal vocabulary program which has as its main goal the encouragement of informal vocabulary development.

When the "New Word" sheet is introduced, students are told that they are to be responsible for the vocabulary list for the class. They are asked to watch carefully during the week for a word which is new to them, whether the word is encountered in school, at home, on television or radio, or on a billboard or cereal box. When they find a word, they are asked to put it on the form, spelled correctly if possible, and to try to arrive at a reasonable meaning for the word from its context. The dictionary should be a last resort if this informal procedure is to become ingrained rather than just "something the teacher made me do." Also on the form should be a space for the student to use the word in a sentence. This might be the original context or one the student has created. Finally, students should record a synonym and antonym (if these are identifiable) and the source of the word.

Next, students are asked to present their new word to the class. Havoc does *not* result if the classroom atmosphere is really one in which vocabulary improvement is important and worthwhile. For example, once quickly around the room the first twenty minutes of class on Monday will yield a stock of twenty or thirty words which the students themselves have encountered. Hopefully, they know their own word already because they had to tell the class about it, and probably they will learn several more instantly just

because their classmates are presenting them. As each word is presented, the creative teacher can, if time allows, turn each one into a mini-lesson on affixes, roots, etymology, slang, usage, context, or just plain delight in the sound and sense of a word. The teacher's enthusiasm about language either comes across here or it does not.

That first time the "New Word" sheet is used in class can be rather harrowing, but that would be no reason to abandon the approach. Someone will surely bring in 1) the last word in the dictionary, 2) a multisyllabic word which consumes the entire blackboard and which no one ever hopes to see again, 3) the name of an exotic disease only three people have ever been known to have, or 4) a technical or foreign word used only by a few people in very specialized fields. However, the teacher's admonition against such words for use in the classroom list will usually squelch such attempts and students will soon settle down to words which can and do form a valuable word bank for the entire class. At times, words which the teacher thought *everyone* knew are presented and it is surprising that everyone sincerely does not know them!

Some learning is bound to take place because the students themselves are finding and presenting these words. But the "New Word" sheet can also be used in any of a number of ways. David Kahle, who suggested this approach in his article "Student-Centered Vocabulary" (*English Journal,* February, 1972), reports having asked students to use the words in compositions, on posters, for classroom word banks, and in many other credit or extra-credit activities beyond the typical weekly "vocabulary test." In fact, the experience of many teachers is that this approach can actually be relatively painless and even fun.

This bank of words should be used carefully in quizzing or testing. Although the students' words could be combined with formal lists of vocabulary or spelling words for the week, care should be taken to avoid reverting to rote memorization of any isolated lists. This would of course defeat the whole purpose of striving to establish informal and life-long vocabulary acquisition skills. But evaluation of some sort is necessary, so after the Monday presentation of the new words and the review and utilization of the words during the week, the Friday test is sure to come. One creative teacher wrote a weekly serial about nonsensical characters in nonsensical situations but used selected "New Words" in the story, gave the students blanks for the words (with the definitions in parentheses) and humorous but correct context so that the opposite of "define the following ten words" was achieved. An

oral test for some students, while others are asked to use the words in written sentences which help to define the words, is an effective approach to counteracting merely memorizing the words. Above all, students should always know that they must be able to *use* and recognize the words in a meaningful context.

The "New Word" sheet approach and an emphasis on words in context as methods for building ever expanding vocabulary banks for any reader are certainly not new ideas. However, the importance of viable vocabulary development as an aid for all reading and study is often overlooked or approached ineffectively. Excitement over ideas must develop from an enthusiasm and mastery of the words used to express those ideas. Effectively used, the "New Word" sheet can be an intriguing approach to vocabulary development.

A Coordinated Course in English and Reading

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Under our previous phase elective program, the English Department and the Reading Department at Romeoville High School were competitors for student enrollment. However, during the last two or three years, the large number of phase elective courses has been replaced by a relatively small number of courses, many of which are required. Also, the "back to basics" movement has recently gained considerable support in our district.

When attention was focussed on the reading scores of our students, we learned that close to half of them were reading two or more years below grade level. Our administration was concerned and cooperative, but was generally unable to furnish us with additional funds. It was apparent that there needed to be closer cooperation between the English and Reading departments. We needed to pool and develop the resources of staff and materials that we already possessed.

English teachers and Reading teachers were not opposed to working closely with one another, but we had been separate for so many years that it was difficult to tell where to begin the process of reunification. The English teachers felt that they lacked background in regard to teaching Reading — as opposed to literature

— in the English classroom. To them the Reading laboratory was a place of mystery to which the English teacher was occasionally lucky enough to send a particularly poor student. Reading teachers, on the other hand, seldom ventured into the English classroom, except for group testing purposes. But the recent increase in required English courses had brought about a corresponding decrease in the number of students who signed up for elective courses in Reading; and faced with diminishing enrollment, Reading teachers were willing to become involved in a new program.

This new program took shape in the form of a coordinated course in English and Reading entitled Teenage Reading. Enrollment for the course was made up of about eighty percent of our tenth grade class. (We decided not to concentrate on our ninth grade class since these students were already involved in a basic writing skills project.) The upper twenty percent of the class had been channeled into an accelerated class entitled Major World Classics. Despite this effort to remove students reading above grade level from the Teenage Reading class, the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Survey Test that we administered as a pre-test still showed a range in scores from fourth grade level to twelfth grade level or higher.

A major purpose of Teenage Reading was, of course, to make our students better readers; but the unusual feature of the class was its emphasis on in-service training for English and Reading teachers. It was a class designed to get English teachers into the Reading lab and to get Reading teachers out of the lab and into the English classrooms. Through making use of team teaching techniques, English teachers and Reading teachers were to become acquainted with each other and with each other's teaching methods and materials. Five English teachers, including myself, and two Reading teachers participated in the program.

During our semester course, students spent nine weeks in the Reading lab and nine weeks in the English classroom. (Valley View District 365U, of which Romeoville High School is a part, is on the 45/15 year-round school plan. That means that every three weeks, or every fifteen school days, one of our four tracks cycles in while another track cycles out. I will not go into the resulting intricacies of scheduling since the discussion would generally not be relevant for other districts. However, the 45/15 plan does allow us to have small group instruction for one third of the time. This proved to be a real benefit to our Teenage Reading program.)

The first team teaching was done in the Reading lab. The lab comprises a fairly large area and contains a series of learning stations used for diagnostic testing and individualized instruction. I believe that it is fairly typical in regard to organization. We English teachers generally found the lab to be well-equipped and efficiently run. Perhaps needless to say, our large English classes usually overcrowded the lab. Although English teachers did help with routine tasks of record keeping and student control, our major purpose for being in the Reading lab was to gain in-service training.

In the Reading laboratory, students were first given the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Survey Test. On the basis of these scores, students were put into one of the Reading Department's three general programs: Basic (more than three years below grade level), Developmental (one to three years below grade level), or Advanced (grade level or above). The completely individualized program makes use of the cycle lesson plan.

Perhaps of greatest interest to English teachers was the laboratory's use of various machines. English teachers were introduced to such machines as Aud/X, a machine that synchronizes a filmstrip and a tape recording; Tachistoscope, a machine capable of flashing single words from 1/2 to 1/100 of a second; Skim and Skan, a machine with a pacing light which may be projected on any printed page; and Controlled Reader, a machine that paces a line of words and prevents re-reading. Not so mysterious to the English teacher (and I won't attempt to list them) were the various books, workbooks, worksheets, and kits which contained individualized lessons dealing with vocabulary, comprehension, phonetics, structure, spelling, and study skills. Students generally enjoyed explaining their individual lessons to their English teacher and discussing their progress. The boys in my classes particularly enjoyed explaining the operation of the various machines to me.

The English classroom portion of our Teenage Reading course did not flow so smoothly as the laboratory portion. The presence of the English teachers in the Reading laboratory had done little to change the normal routine. The presence of the Reading teachers in the English classrooms proved to be more threatening to both the Reading teachers and the English teachers. The Reading teachers were unaccustomed to acting as consultants. The English teachers felt particular pressure because they were expected to change or improve their usual methods of classroom instruction.

Luckily our Teenage Reading classes had inherited a great many high interest books from our previous phase elective courses. These books, many in classroom sets, deal with mystery and suspense,

teenage romance and adventure, sports and action stories, and science fiction. In order to build teacher confidence, we referred to our first English classroom unit of Teenage Reading as "teacher choice." The English teacher was to choose some material, probably something with which he/she had previously enjoyed success, and try to apply to it some of the reading techniques learned in the Reading laboratory. I myself chose science fiction as a general category, and we did most of our reading from *Star Trek* stories. With the help of the Reading teacher, I developed a system by which students were graded according to how many stories they read and how well they did on the accompanying comprehension checks that I devised. Making use of vocabulary cards, the class developed a rather long vocabulary list in the area of science fiction. Students were also allowed to earn credit by watching *Star Trek* and other science fiction shows on television. The unit was well received by the students, but I must admit that it demanded much more than an average amount of work from me. (Many of the materials will, of course, be reusable.)

For the next unit, the Reading teacher assumed a more active role. This was our newspaper and magazine unit. The chairman of the Reading Department had already developed material for use in studying the newspaper. This he shared with us. Our local newspaper sent us two weeks of free newspapers. For this unit we divided our students into two ability groups. While one group, under the direction of the Reading teacher, was working on newspapers, the other group, under the direction of the English teacher, was in the library using magazines. While in the library, students improved their library skills and became acquainted with magazines appropriate to their reading level and interests. Perhaps I should note that here, and elsewhere in the English classroom portion of the course, various written reports and compositions were required. We did not wish to become so zealous about reading skills that we completely neglected writing skills.

The final unit of the course was referred to as "student choice." Since students had been rather closely regimented throughout most of the course, we thought that they should have at least one opportunity to choose their own reading material. A suitable student contract was developed. Students were allowed to work individually or in small groups. Because of large class sizes, the Reading teacher usually took to the library those students who were doing silent reading. Various methods of evaluation were used: panel discussions, tests, written reports, oral reports, works of art, and dramatic presentations. This final unit did become a bit hectic, but it was fun.

At the end of the course, students were re-tested with the Gates-MacGinitie test. Improvement was adequate. About two thirds of the students showed an average improvement on the test of about one grade level. However, about one third of the students either failed to improve or scored lower on the post-test than on the pre-test. Of the three reading groups -- Basic, Developmental, and Advanced, the Advanced group showed the least improvement. Perhaps the only thing that these Advanced level students needed was a test which recorded greater range. Nonetheless, in the future we will try to decrease the number of Advanced level students enrolled in Teenage Reading. The most capable of them will be assigned instead to our accelerated Major World Classics course.

Even though they realized that they were being used somewhat as guinea pigs, students in Teenage Reading enjoyed the course. They liked the variety of teachers, teaching techniques, materials, and classroom areas. The course failure rate was low — less than ten percent.

We felt that the in-service, teacher training aspect of Teenage Reading was also a success. The English teacher did indeed learn about the Reading laboratory. The Reading teacher did indeed help teach reading skills to students in English classrooms. It is true that not all English teachers or Reading teachers always approved of what they saw; but all involved widened their perspective. All of us became acquainted with people, with classroom and work areas, with standardized tests, with teaching machines, and with books and materials with which we were previously unfamiliar.

We are going to continue our Teenage Reading course, but with some modifications. For the students enrolled in Teenage Reading for the 1977-78 school year, the experience will be largely the same: students will have nine weeks in the Reading lab and nine weeks in the English classroom with emphasis placed on reading skills. Cutbacks in staff will make it impossible for us to continue with the in-service, team teaching feature of the course. However, we hope that the five English teachers and the two Reading teachers who participated during the 1976-77 school year will continue to reap the benefits of their in-service experience. Also, during the 1977-78 school year, we hope to sponsor one or more college credit workshops in Reading for English teachers and other interested staff members.

Teenage Reading did not solve all our problems in regard to improving our teaching skills and our students' reading skills, but it did serve to bridge the gap that had unfortunately been widening between the English Department and the Reading Department.

Good Luck with a Unified Reading Program!

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Once upon a time I got a unified reading program organized and running just the way I wanted it, at Northwestern Military and Naval Academy, Walworth, Wisconsin, a boarding school for boys, grades 8-12. It seems almost like a fairy tale today, but when it happened, it all seemed perfectly natural, the reward for patience and persistence. Were we just lucky, or could it be done in other circumstances — maybe your circumstances?

Our 170 boys were typically average-or-above in intelligence and behind more than a year in reading. Many had not done well enough in public school to justify their ambitions for college. Senior year CEEB Scholastic Aptitude scores showed, on the average, a "verbal" 85 points less than the "math." A great deal of the seniors' time and attention was being devoted to vocabulary lists and practice tests, with not a bit of improvement to show for it.

When I was hired as a remedial reading teacher, my first concern, and my first opportunity to show the worth of reading instruction lay with tutoring some of the weakest readers. The first year's experience was a lesson for us all, principally because of the careful program evaluation I was able to make. Here were my conclusions after one year:

1. The reading instructor is the best qualified to select students who would profit from remedial instruction, particularly in the course of testing students for school entrance.
2. The poorest readers had the least opportunity to improve, even with help, since they had to spend more time on assignments in other subjects.
3. Two or three thirty-minute periods a week of individual or dual instruction brought great improvement to those boys who found time to read outside of class even an hour a week, but only small improvement to those who did not.
4. All-subject averages of boys getting reading instruction were .6 better on a 4.0 scale than for a similar group not getting it.

With this evidence it was possible to institute a full-hour, full-credit course in Reading, with four to six boys per class. Goal:

Each student to gain success and satisfaction in reading. Individual training was now accomplished by circulating students out of this class. Training was principally in word attack and comprehension of texts and high-interest material matched to ability levels. In general, intensive sessions with individuals would get them off to a good start and renew their interest and effectiveness. Finding books each boy considered rewarding required the greatest effort but brought the greatest success. Most drills found in workbooks had negative benefit. No task was a good one that couldn't be handled with almost immediate and increasing success. Most comprehension exercises were of little help, when used according to directions; only when there was constant interaction between teacher and student or students were they really helpful. Group and individual counseling about school and reading problems, *as needed*, brought a strong positive response from the boys, as did developing a group spirit. Almost all the twenty-four boys taking reading this year caught up with their expected reading level, and some forged far ahead.

As a result of this success, I was able to get an hour a week of English class time allotted for reading for all students. Since required book reports were actually bringing negative results, they were replaced by informal teacher-student discussions. When teachers showed this kind of interest in students' reading, students began to increase their reading generally and to investigate new areas. Of course, the teachers who read most produced the students who read most.

In addition, we also instituted a twice-weekly "free" reading hour for everyone. With the help of another teacher, I now began supervising the reading of all 170 boys in their rooms. Developing a familiarity with each student's interests and abilities led to discussions or even fleeting exchanges which helped to motivate reading. Not unimportant was the persona I displayed for the students' benefit — one who had read everything, who read as he walked, who claimed reading was more important than eating, sleeping, or studying. That I convincingly enjoyed "their" books gave weight to my recommendations. That I would listen to their recommendations only if they could sell me on them stimulated them to read more critically.

Fortunately, my wide knowledge of non-fiction helped me gain access to students who resisted the literary. Digging up a book of special interest for a particular student always made that student a promoter of that book to others and ready to accept other recommendations thereafter. Identifying reading leaders and feeding them books of excellent quality had an incredible effect. By this

means, *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *1984* swept through the school in a matter of weeks.

Previously, private hoards of lurid books and magazines had been condemned and sporadically confiscated for the teachers' lounge. I preferred to accept the interest of the boys in sex, war, or whatever and to discuss the weakness of their choices in relation to their interest. Fantasy is a bit like fudge; you can like it a lot, but not as a steady diet. The boys also wanted to know about reality, about what real people, including themselves, were like. This gave me an opportunity to recommend good-quality books as representations of reality. I doubt that the good books drove out all the bad, but the good ones began to circulate just as freely.

What a change had come over this school! Barracks bull sessions were turning into book discussions as often as not, book-trading had become a constant activity, and current favorites had to be protected from theft by the more rapacious. The reading program had become self-perpetuating. Each year new students were infected more quickly. The reading boom exerted a demand for books; additional books increased the demand. With this success I was able to get extra funds for selecting high-interest books for a rather pedestrian and underworked library. Alumni and parents responded to a newsletter appeal by bringing in books from their shelves and attics. Marvelously for that time, the library broke all precedent and bought paperbacks to provide duplicates of books that were in high demand. Students who were avid subscribers to record clubs discovered book clubs. Everybody was picking up paperbacks, reading them, and passing them along. Library checkouts doubled three years in a row — that's two times two times two.

Now everybody was boosting reading. The administration saw that it was saving both weak students and recalcitrant ones, more students were succeeding and staying, and College Board scores were going up. As library use increased, the library gave more freedom, and boys took more responsibility; we had student assistants for the first time and night hours. A happy librarian who knew her books were being read didn't regret the missing and worn ones so much. In a reading atmosphere, some teachers grew to feel that perhaps they had a responsibility to teach reading skills in their subject areas.

The three-month summer hiatus presented a special challenge. For the first summer I supplied a well-planned reading list (arranged by type and difficulty) of old favorites and new books approved by various agencies. Our boys found their local libraries did not have either sort. Apparently, many libraries buy young children's books and escape literature for adults almost exclusively.

Bookstores were also a washout for this purpose. Results were only fair. For the next (and succeeding) years I went after paperbacks, traveling to spend days in college and big city bookstores, collecting information from publishers, locating and learning the operating procedures and reliability of all distributors within a hundred miles, and culling *Paperback Books in Print*. Finally I had 150 sample copies of currently available books collected. These samples were displayed on the library tables, grouped into four categories, students to pick one from each of three or four:

Science, Medicine, and Mathematics
People, Places, and Events
Good Fiction, Easy
Classic and Modern Literature

Every student had plenty of time to examine the books and ask questions about them, and then place an order for those that he chose to read that summer. Would you believe fifteen orders for the *Odyssey* and seventy for *Brave New World* out of 140 boys? Twice as many books were ordered as would have been required. At my insistence, students were not required to report formally on their summer reading but were given a chance to talk about it in the first English classes in the fall. Returning boys were mentally sharp — ready for book-learning as soon as classes began. Books that weren't read over the summer came back with them. Parents were excited over the mature books their boys were reading without prompting. The boys were so pleased with the summer reading program that resistance to "twelve months of school" completely vanished.

By the end of the third year some of the worst readers had become some of the best. College Board scores had improved dramatically, with verbal scores catching up to Math and seniors improving on their junior scores by an average of seventy-five points. Best of all, our graduates were reporting that they were seeking out reading materials on their own, and were more confident than their college classmates in dealing with their studies.

It took a good bit of later experience to make me see that the success of this unified reading program was largely a matter of luck. First, the administrators didn't know enough — or didn't presume to know enough — about reading or evaluation to set up much in the way of guidelines, and they hoped only for small improvement. This circumstance allowed me to make proposals and even decisions about the program and gave me time to develop the program in an organic way. Second, diagnostic testing, reading instruction, program evaluation, and school-wide evaluation fell

into the hands of one person, who was adequately prepared to handle them. Coordination was therefore no problem. Third, the reading program was self-supporting. Parents were happy to pay extra for effective reading instruction for those in reading classes, many books were donated, and profits from pocket book sales bought library books. This circumstance eliminated a major source of administrative resistance. Fourth, communication among students, parents, and administrators was good. When reading students improved in all their subjects, the word passed quickly. Fifth, there was easy access to all communication lines, formal and informal. Sixth, the necessity of doing step-by-step development turned out to be a virtue. Seeing is believing. As each step proved to be a solid one, everyone involved was willing to try the next. There was never the massive resistance to change that an instantly imposed program tends to generate.

To show why I call these things a matter of luck, let me give you an example of bad luck. My next position was in a large high school — about four thousand students. By the end of the first week I had everyone, it seemed, enthusiastic about setting up a paperback bookstore, including the superintendent. No committee, no administrator, and no faculty member ever actually opposed such a move, but it took seven years to make all of that good will produce the desired result. I felt as if I had broken a mirror.

Buddy and Reading

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During the first few days of a semester, as students become acquainted with a new teacher, it is usually evident that some are unable to read any of the books generally prescribed for a particular age and grade level. The following is an account of one such student and the impact of that experience for him and for me, the teacher.

Buddy could not read, yet when material was presented to him, as when someone read to him, he caught on immediately and he retained what he had learned. I knew that he was bright enough to learn to read, but if I placed him in books that were beyond his comprehension, he would never learn to read.

I soon learned that Buddy had already received the remedial

reading treatment. He had been placed in second-grade books, but he called the books "baby books" and he refused to read "baby stories." Reading machines and programmed instruction books had not taught Buddy to read either. Flash cards, games, and motor development exercises were used with Buddy to no avail. When I talked with previous teachers, they would shake their heads, and admit that they had failed to help to solve Buddy's reading problem.

Buddy was an outstanding athlete, and I soon gained his confidence as I coached him in the school's after-school sports program, but each time I talked to him about reading, I always received the same response: "I can't read, and I do not want to try to read." As I listened to him, I realized he was really saying, "I wish I could read, but I have failed so many times, I am on safer ground not to try any more." I had to find a way to teach Buddy to read!

I soon discovered that not only was Buddy an outstanding athlete, but he was also an accomplished artist for his age. He always worked on social group tasks when the committee's product included pictures. During one of the work sessions, the group that included Buddy had a number of sketches and current magazines spread out on a table in front of them. They were selecting images to illustrate the group's report for the class. As I moved from group to group, I approached the one Buddy was in. I was astonished to find him reading to the other members of his group, and they were listening intently to every word. As I sat down with the group, I realized that Buddy was not reading words; he was reading pictures. He would tell the story matching an image on a page and then turn the pages of the magazine to the next picture and tell a story that matched that picture. As I listened in wonder, I noticed that some of the stories were better than the ones in the magazine. If Buddy could read pictures, why not use this skill as a catalyst to teach him to read!

The next day, during our personal conference time, Buddy and I agreed that he would write a book. Each day he would draw a picture, and I would help him to write five or six sentences about the picture. I would help him to read the sentences so that he could read his book to others. As a part of our agreement, Buddy had to be able to recognize the words and sentences in different contexts; thus, the words and sentences were used to form a phonics program. He made his own flash cards from the words he had composed and took them home for flash card drills with his mother. It wasn't difficult to perceive how proud Buddy was of his accomplishments. All I had to do was to watch his gleaming face as he

read his story to his classmates each day. Soon those classmates became a part of the "teaching-Buddy-to-read" movement.

Different students volunteered to help proctor Buddy's phonics exercises, help him with flash card drills, and listen to him as he read his stories orally. At first, all the basic subject matter material for which Buddy was held accountable was placed on a tape recorder by students who read well. He and four other students in class would follow the reading in the book while they listened to the tapes. Either I or an able student supervised these sessions. Later, words that Buddy had learned were circled in the reading, and he read these words with the tape. He was rewarded with three points for each word he recognized and pronounced correctly, and ten points for any new word that he was able to figure out.

After the lesson, points were totaled and Buddy shared the results with me. When the total points were high, I rewarded him by praising him personally, and the entire class shared his accomplishments when improvement was announced to the class.

As soon as Buddy attained a reading vocabulary so that he could read simple books, we started the "stacked books" game. To play this game, a list of low vocabulary reading books with high-interest levels was selected, and the librarian provided additional books to supplement our classroom collection. A special space was marked off in a prominent area of the room, and as Buddy read the books, he would stack them so that everyone could notice on a day-to-day basis how much higher the stack was. In a short period of time, we had to start two stacks--three stacks--and then the class started counting the number of stacks. Some of the time, Buddy would read the books orally for others, and other times he reported to students and answered questions concerning the books.

The best method for teaching a youngster to read will vary, depending on the teacher, the student, and the situation. This particular method was appropriate in all three of the above contingencies. During the four months of the remaining school term, plus a continuation of the program during the summer months, Buddy learned how to read books prescribed for his age and grade level. An inexperienced teacher not only learned a great deal about individualized instruction, but at graduation Buddy's misty eyes and proud face conveyed true feelings; he had successfully completed his English requirements!